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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE DEPARTMENT HEAD IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS  
OF ALBERTA

by



AUDREY MAY CLARK

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Department Head in the High Schools of Alberta," submitted by Audrey May Clark in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.





## ABSTRACT

This study examined the nature of the position of department head in selected Alberta high schools. Nine sub-problems were posed; two questionnaires, containing both fixed-alternative and open-end questions, were used to elicit data.

Fifty-eight high schools, each containing twenty-five teachers or more, were selected by a data retrieval system. The superintendents of the school districts, divisions and counties, in which these fifty-eight high schools were located, were asked to complete The General Information Survey to determine which school systems employed department heads. Additional background information about the department headship was also requested.

The superintendents reported that they employed a total of two hundred and twenty department heads, in thirty-six high schools, ranging in teacher population from twenty-five to one hundred and forty teachers.

The department heads of these thirty-six schools were asked to complete the questionnaire entitled The Department Head in the High Schools of Alberta. They were requested to describe the nature of the high schools in the sample, the nature of the respondents, the nature of the position of department head, the actual duties and suggested functions of the department head, the criteria for the selection of department head and various opinions relating to the department head position.

The per cent return of usable questionnaires was as follows:

(1) superintendents - 100% and (2) department heads - 82%.





Statistical treatment of the data involved the following:

- (1) frequency distributions and percentages; (2) ranking of frequencies;
- (3) Spearman rho rank correlations; and (4) cross-tabulations.

The actual duties performed by department heads occurred with the greatest frequency in the area of communication and coordination of all aspects of the department. Provision of materials, supplies and equipment was the second area of greatest frequency.

The department heads chose "Leadership Ability" as the most important criterion for their selection. The least important criterion for the selection of the department head was reported to be "Seniority in the Department. "

The department heads revealed that the greatest problems they faced were a lack of time to complete all the necessary tasks and the lack of a clearly defined role of authority and responsibility.

Finally, the superintendents expressed the opinion that the greatest strength of the department headship was in the orientation of new teachers into the department; whereas, the department heads' perception of their greatest strength was in the ability to coordinate all aspects of instruction within the department.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Senior high schools have become increasingly more complex operations in the past two decades. In 1945, there was one composite high school in Alberta.<sup>1</sup> By 1968, the number of Alberta composite high schools with over one thousand students had increased to twenty-four.<sup>2</sup> With the increased size and complexity of the high school organization, the high school principal's tasks and responsibilities have multiplied to an enormous extent. Some of the wide-ranging problems for principals of large composite high schools are stated by Brown:

It is characteristic of areas of large population--whether cities or districts--to build large schools. It was felt, however, that the composite form of the large school places peculiar demands upon the principal with respect to co-ordination, time-tabling, knowledge of a wide range of programs, management and maintenance of diverse specialized equipment and frequently, a knowledge of swimming pools and cafeteria operations.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>T. C. Byrne, "Alberta," Composite High Schools in Canada, John H. M. Andrews and Alan F. Brown, eds. (Edmonton, Alberta: The Committee on Educational Research, The University of Alberta, 1958), p. 68.

<sup>2</sup>David J. Collett, "The Role of the Assistant Principal in a Large Composite High School," (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1969), p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Alan F. Brown, "Problems and Conclusions," Composite High Schools in Canada, John H. M. Andrews and Alan F. Brown, eds. (Edmonton, Alberta: The Committee on Educational Research, The University of Alberta, 1958), p. 96.



These peculiar demands on the principal's time and energies have necessitated the introduction of new administrative, supervisory and teaching positions in the high school to assist the principal in the operation of the school. One such position which has been created to facilitate coordination of classroom instruction is that of the high school department head.

As early as 1958, Dr. T. C. Byrne, former Chief Superintendent of Schools for Alberta, indicated the presence of department heads in the large high schools of Alberta:

Administrative structures differ from school to school and from district to district. The departmental organization is becoming the norm, however, with the chairmen or department heads appointed by the board and paid special supervisory allowances. Typically a composite high school will have departments of English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, business education, technical or industrial arts, home economics and so forth.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, while the presence of the department head has become an established fact in Alberta, his role in the total high school operation has not, as yet, been clearly described.

If high school principals are to become increasingly involved in the complex management of all aspects of the large composite high school, then increased delegation of responsibility for classroom instruction will be directed toward the department heads. However, the functions of the department heads do not seem to be clearly specified on a province-wide basis.

Many questions seem to arise concerning the nature of the position. Why do some department heads seem to hold administrative

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<sup>4</sup>Byrne, op. cit., p. 67.





positions while others seem to serve only in a supervisory capacity? Why do department heads seem to operate within a different frame of reference depending upon such aspects as the size of the high school, the subject area of each department, and the role of the department head as perceived by the high school principal? Why do department heads seem to exhibit varying lengths of tenure and varying terms of employment?

Thus, a significant question seems to be whether or not the position of department head, as it exists today, is capable of generating increased efficiency in the total high school organization. At this point in time, it would seem evident that the department headship should be examined and described with a view to determining its potential value in assisting the principal in the efficient operation of the large Alberta high school.

## II. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. The purpose of this study was to survey in detail the position of department head in the high schools of Alberta.

Sub-problems. In order that the major problem could be defined more clearly, it was divided into a number of sub-problems.

1. Which Alberta school districts, divisions and counties employed department heads in high schools of twenty-five or more teachers?
2. What were some of the terms of employment for high school department heads? (e. g., method of selection,



length of tenure, remuneration, released time for classroom supervision, job specifications, in-service education. )

3. What opinions were held by superintendents of Alberta school districts, divisions and counties regarding the strengths, weaknesses and possible improvements in the department head position?
4. What were the characteristics of teachers employed as department heads in Alberta high schools of twenty-five or more teachers?
5. What was the nature of the position of department head in Alberta high schools of twenty-five or more teachers?
6. What were the actual duties being performed by department heads?
7. What duties should be performed by department heads?
8. What were the most important criteria for the selection of department heads in Alberta?
9. What were the opinions of Alberta department heads relating to the major strengths, the problems and the potential for improvement of the position of department head within the total high school organization?



### III. THE NEED FOR THE STUDY

Very little up to date information was available in Alberta, about the high school department head; however, an estimate indicated that department heads represented nine per cent to eleven per cent of the total high school teaching population. Educational research had ignored the position of department head in Alberta; there was a dearth of Canadian literature on this subject and yet the position of department head seemed to be expanding in many school systems.

The following statements indicate the absence of information about the high school department head in Alberta:

1. There was no central list of all high school department heads employed in the province.
2. There was no central list which might indicate which school districts, divisions or counties employed high school department heads.
3. There was no way to estimate the total number of department heads because teacher classifications group classroom teacher and department head in the same category.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>The category of department head is now included in the information collected by the Department of Education in Alberta each September. ("Teacher's Report on Qualifications, Salary, and Experience," Form 1302-328, September 1969.)





4. There was no evidence available that urban districts employed department heads more than rural school divisions or counties.
5. There was no authentic historical information as to when, and why, department heads were introduced into Alberta high schools.
6. There was no evidence of a major research study into the position of the high school department head since 1958.
7. There was little information available about individual school district action research projects about the high school department head.
8. There was little evidence of evaluation studies of high school department heads in Alberta.

#### IV. DELIMITATIONS

1. The study was confined to the two hundred and twenty high school department heads presently employed in the thirty-six larger high schools of Alberta.
2. Assistant department heads, coordinators, and assistant coordinators were excluded.
3. For the purposes of this study, the high schools selected consisted of a teaching population of twenty-five or more teachers. (This stated size was also used as a criterion for identifying large high schools by the Alberta



Composite High School Principals' Association.)<sup>6</sup>

## V. LIMITATIONS

1. The instruments used to describe the nature of the position of high school department head were both used in their entirety for the first time during this study. The unknown validity and reliability of the instruments placed serious limitations on the study.
2. The nature of the responses expressed by the department heads in the open-ended questions of the questionnaire may also present serious limitations to this study, for the opinions expressed may not represent the honest opinions of the respondents.
3. The procedure of placing all open-end responses into pre-arranged categories for purposes of analysis placed additional limitations upon the study. Because of ambiguity of terms or lack of clarity of the response, the researcher may not always have placed the open-end opinion into the correct category.
4. The small number of department heads in some subject areas, (Religion, Girls' Vocational, Special Vocational, Commercial Foods, Student Activities, Industrial Arts and Fine Arts) placed further limitations on the study.

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<sup>6</sup>Edmonton Journal, Thursday, March 20, 1969.



## VI. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

As used in this study, certain terms are defined as follows:

Departmentalization is an arrangement where each instructor teaches only one or two subjects or where instructors are grouped together according to subject specialty.

A department head is a member of the high school teaching staff, who, in addition to performing the usual duties of teaching in a subject department, has also been assigned some responsibility for administering the affairs of the department and for supervising the teachers of the department.

A department chairman is a term which will be used as a synonym for department head. This term will be used extensively in the review of the literature.

A subject coordinator is the term applied to a senior member of a high school department who is responsible for the coordination of the instruction of the department. The subject coordinator acts as a supervisor and emphasizes voluntary cooperation and mutual sharing of ideas among all members of the department. Although the term of subject coordinator is often used interchangeably with the term of department head, the subject coordinator's main task is that of the supervision of classroom instruction only. A subject coordinator may or may not receive remuneration for the task of coordinating department instruction.

A high school is a secondary school employing twenty-five or more teachers on its teaching staff. In addition, a high school





must consist of Grades ten, eleven and twelve--or any two levels of high school instruction, e. g., Grades ten and eleven, or Grades eleven and twelve.

A large-sized high school is one which employs eighty teachers or more.

A medium-sized high school is one which employs from fifty to seventy-nine teachers.

A small-sized high school is one which employs from twenty-five to forty nine-teachers.

## VII. OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

This study of the nature of the high school department head in Alberta consists of eight chapters. This chapter has been concerned with an introduction to the problem under study.

Chapter II includes an examination of the related literature and a brief survey of studies dealing with the department headship.

The design of the study is outlined in Chapter III. It consists of a description of the two instruments used to obtain the data, the sample, the collection and organization of the data, the returns and the analysis of the data.

Chapter IV includes the information provided by the school superintendents about the nature of the position of department head in their respective school districts, divisions and counties.

A description of the nature of the respondents and the nature of the position of department head is presented in Chapter V. In addition, criteria for the selection of department heads will be



presented and compared to results of a department head study in the United States.<sup>7</sup>

Chapter VI describes the wide range of "actual" duties performed by department heads in Alberta. The "suggested" duties of high school department heads are also reported.

Opinions held by respondents as to the major strengths, major problems and possible improvements in the department head position are discussed in Chapter VII.

This thesis concludes with a restatement of the problem, a summary of the findings, implications, and suggestions for further research.

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<sup>7</sup> Lewis M. Ciminillo, "The Department Heads' Perception of the Functions and Characteristics of Their Position," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966).



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The use of department heads in the administration and organization of high schools grew to its maximum development in the United States during the twenties and thirties.<sup>1</sup> Presumably, the high school principal could not be an expert in the numerous subject areas of a diverse high school curriculum; therefore, the position of a teacher specialist in each subject area was created, primarily to serve as an additional service to the high school principal. Because the administrators of secondary schools of the United States have had more experience with department heads than their Canadian counterparts, much of the literature will discuss the position of department head within the American context.

This chapter reviews the literature describing the position of department head under the following headings: (1) The Reasons for the Introduction of the Department Head; (2) The Selection of the Department Head; (3) The Qualifications of the Department Head; (4) Duties of the Department Head; (5) The Advantages and Disadvantages of the Department Head Position; (6) The Role Conflict of the Department Head; and (7) A Summary of Related Studies Concerning the Department Headship.

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<sup>1</sup>Harl R. Douglass, Modern Administration of Secondary Schools. (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1954), p. 31.





# I. THE REASONS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

The literature suggests a wide range of possible reasons for the introduction of department heads to the high school organization.

Morwood-Clark and Faulds<sup>2</sup> indicate that the position of department head has evolved over the years because of a need; whereas, Novak<sup>3</sup> suggests that historically the position of department head grew in conscious imitation of collegiate departmental organization.

Roberts<sup>4</sup> reports that in Ontario, the department headship grew from the policy of allowing only teacher specialists to instruct the senior classes in each high school. In Alberta, however, Garrett<sup>5</sup> indicates that the department headship grew and developed from the position of subject coordinator.

However, these reasons may only be secondary to one of the prime reasons for the establishment of the department head as stated by Thomas:<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>L. L. Morwood-Clark and R. M. Faulds, "More About Department Heads," B. C. Teacher, XL:8, (May-June 1961), p. 400.

<sup>3</sup>Benjamin J. Novak, "The Department Headship Today," Educational Administration and Supervision, XLIV:2, (March 1958), p. 91.

<sup>4</sup>Michael F. Roberts, "New Duties for Department Heads," The Bulletin of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, XL:3, (May 1960), p. 151.

<sup>5</sup>L. J. D. Garrett, "The Role and Functions of Department Heads," (unpublished typewritten study, Edmonton, 1963), pp. 1-3.

<sup>6</sup>Donald Thomas, "Which Organization--Department or Division--For Your School?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLIX:303, (October 1965), p. 49.



As the high school grew in size and complexity, it was soon evident that the principal was no longer able to carry out all the original responsibilities of his position. The assistance needed by the principal and greater attention to subject matter areas soon produced the departmental organization with department heads as the dominant organizational structure for the secondary school.

Additional assistance to the principal by the department head is also revealed by Maczuga:<sup>7</sup>

Department heads may help to ease the load by reducing the number of minor problems, by reducing the number of persons in direct contact with the principal, and also reducing the details involved with staff supervision.

Most contemporary writers agree with Gruman,<sup>8</sup> however, when they state that the fundamental purpose of creating the position of department chairman is to improve classroom instruction.

Edmonson, Roemer and Bacon further emphasize the need for a department head to coordinate the instruction of students with differing abilities.<sup>9</sup>

If there is any broad attempt to segregate students according to ability, to adjust content to individual ability, or to experiment with new materials or new approaches to problems of instruction, a departmental or subject leader becomes essential.

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<sup>7</sup>Paul Maczuga, "Selecting Department Heads," The Clearing House, XXXVII:4, (December 1962), p. 239.

<sup>8</sup>Allen J. Gruman, "Improving Instruction Through the Use of Department Heads," California Journal of Secondary Education, XXX:3, p. 167.

<sup>9</sup>J. B. Edmonson, Joseph Roemer and Francis Bacon, The Administration of the Modern Secondary School. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1956), p. 100.





Wallace<sup>10</sup> adds another dimension to the reasons for a department head by stating that the establishment of department heads for subject areas "...is based on the premise that these people will be skilled teachers and, relieved of other classroom responsibilities, the improvement of the instructional program will become their prime interest."

A directive from the Edmonton Public School Board,<sup>11</sup> early in the development of the department headship, stresses the necessity for improvement of instruction.

Just as the office of assistant principal was created to assist the principal in his administration of large schools, so the office of department head has now been created to assist and direct groups of teachers in their professional growth and in their work toward the constant upgrading of pupil achievement in specific subject areas.

Another interesting reason for the introduction of department heads--but one which is not usually stated--is that cited by the Edmonton Public Teachers' Local of the Alberta Teachers' Association:<sup>12</sup>

... it was felt that it would be a way of recognizing some of those senior high school teachers who were desirous of an administrative or quasi-administrative position but who found that the openings for such in the senior high schools were extremely limited. It was felt that were these senior high school

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<sup>10</sup>Charles E. Wallace, "An Administrative Organization For Instructional Improvement," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLV:262, (February 1961), p. 35.

<sup>11</sup>"Department Heads," Edmonton Public School Board, (Edmonton: mimeographed material, 1967), p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>"Coordinators and Department Heads in the Edmonton Public School System," (Edmonton: Alberta Teachers' Association, mimeographed material, February 1969), p. 1.





teachers to apply for an administrative position in an elementary or junior high school they would find themselves teaching in an area for which they had not been trained and for which they had little or no experience.

Whatever diverse reasons might have been stated for the introduction of department heads into the high schools, the writers generally concur with Stephenson when he states the main reason for the existence of the department head:<sup>13</sup>

Departmental organization exists for the improvement of the quality of classroom instruction. Apart from this, it has no place in educational administration. Good departmental organization has several by-products: better communication, more inspired teaching, happier personnel, and a more cohesive work group.

Thus, the department head may have a positive effect in the coordination of the improvement of classroom instruction.

## II. THE SELECTION OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

Several writers agree that the methods for selection of department heads have not been very effective. Maczuga<sup>14</sup> facetiously suggests that "... selection has been made, in most cases, as a reward for long service or for amassing a notable number of 'brownie points.'"

Jensen<sup>15</sup> laments the practice of electing a new chairman every

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<sup>13</sup>Claude E. Stephenson, "Departmental Organization for Better Instruction," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLV:269, (December 1961), p. 9.

<sup>14</sup>Maczuga, op. cit., p. 239.

<sup>15</sup>Lisbeth S. Jensen, "Department Chairman: Why He Often Quits With Pleasure," The Clearing House, XXIII:5, (January 1949), p. 284.



two years on a rotating chairmanship. Manlove and Buser<sup>16</sup> further suggest that "...this practice of electing department heads by members of the department is a questionable policy which is likely to reduce their status and effectiveness in the eyes of both teachers and administrators."

Clement<sup>17</sup> feels that the awarding of the chairmanship to those teachers with seniority in the department is also a questionable practice.

Clement<sup>18</sup> feels that the selection of department heads should be improved and cites four effective methods of selecting teachers for the department headship:

1. The selection of the new department head should be based on the recommendation of the administration, especially the school principal.
2. The department members choose one of their number to recommend to the principal who passes along the recommendation to the superintendent and the school committee.
3. The vacancy would be announced and a job analysis publicized much as would be done for a new teaching position. ... Teachers would apply for the position, presenting evidence of their qualifications in terms of the job description and being interviewed by the selection committee.

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<sup>16</sup>Donald Manlove and Robert Buser, "The Department Head: Myths and Reality," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, L:313, (November 1966), p. 105.

<sup>17</sup>Stanley L. Clement, "Choosing the Department Head," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLV:267, (October 1961), p. 49.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 50-51.





4. . . . The department might be organized as a committee of the whole; the chairmanship would rotate among the members of the department for terms of one year.

Clement also discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each of these four criteria for methods of selection.

The findings of Easterday<sup>19</sup> in 1965 indicated that a possible improvement in selection was evidenced in that seventy-seven per cent of department heads questioned were selected by the principal and the superintendent.

Finally, Manlove and Buser,<sup>20</sup> emphasize the need for better methods of selection of department heads.

A sound selection system is needed, one which is compatible to and consistent with the functions assigned department heads. Criteria for selection should be established as a result of a study of the functions to be rendered by department heads. . . .

The principal should be the key person in the selection process.

Thus, the literature seems to emphasize the need for the improvement of selection procedures in the choice of the high school department head.

### III. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

The literature discusses many of the ideal personal and professional qualifications deemed necessary for the high school department head.

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<sup>19</sup>Kenneth Easterday, "The Department Chairman: What Are His Duties and Qualifications?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLIX:303, (October 1965), p. 81.

<sup>20</sup>Manlove and Buser, op. cit., p. 105.





Waltham<sup>21</sup> lists some of the personal qualifications for department heads:

1. Emotionally stable and mature, not easily upset, courteous manner.
2. Neatly groomed and dressed, pleasing voice, friendly, sense of humour.
3. Desire to serve and give helpful suggestions.
4. Carries out responsibilities promptly, cooperative attitude toward administration, prompt in all appointments.
5. Sincere and sympathetic attitude, ability to gain and hold cooperation of teachers.
6. Makes teachers feel free to call on him for advice, suggestions, and solutions to classroom problems.

Another personal qualification is stated by Shouse.<sup>22</sup> "If a department head is to be of value to the school . . . , he must be a friendly, helping colleague who makes no pretense of having official prerogatives."

Nolte<sup>23</sup> suggests that a department head " . . . should be a staff person who acts as a coordinator, a specialist, a stimulator and an ideas person."

Stephenson<sup>24</sup> cites another of the main qualities of the department head:

<sup>21</sup>W. Alan Waltham, "A High School Department Head Views Supervision," The National Business Education Quarterly, XXIX:4, (Summer 1961), p. 25.

<sup>22</sup>R. D. Shouse, "The Status and Duties of Department Heads," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XXXIV:167, (January 1950), p. 165.

<sup>23</sup>M. Chester Nolte, An Introduction to School Administration. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1966), p. 260.

<sup>24</sup>Stephenson, op. cit., p. 12.



Regardless of his many other duties as supervisor of instruction, the department chairman's first responsibility is to the classes he teaches. It is through his unparalleled teaching here that he becomes recognized as an instructional leader.

Shouse<sup>25</sup> further suggests that " . . . to be of value, the department head must, by virtue of superior teaching ability and of superior knowledge of people and of his subject field, be able to exert continuous leadership in his department. "

In a study by Easterday,<sup>26</sup> it was suggested that in addition to experience and academic training, the department head should possess the following five qualifications:

1. Ability to work with people
2. Knowledge of subject matter
3. Knowledge of educational methods and curriculum
4. Recognition by department members as a leader
5. Interest in improving the department

Ovard<sup>27</sup> stresses the administrative qualities necessary for a department chairman:

Too frequently, the department chairman is simply a glorified teacher. However, in this rapidly changing society with its increased demands for specialization, the department head should be superior in teaching skills and in curricular development and above all else, a dynamic, creative administrator.

Rinker,<sup>28</sup> on the other hand, suggests that a department head is " . . . always a teacher first and an administrator afterward. "

<sup>25</sup>Shouse, op. cit., p. 164.

<sup>26</sup>Easterday, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>27</sup>Glen F. Ovvard, Administration of the Changing Secondary School. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1966), p. 198.

<sup>28</sup>Floyd Rinker, "The Department Head," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XXXIV:174 (December 1950), p. 48.





Maczuga<sup>29</sup> summarizes the necessary qualifications needed for the "ideal" department head:

In the choice of a department head, common sense is a reasonable quality to look for. It may be evidenced in some concrete measurements: education, experience, and sheer physical stamina. Certain abilities are also essential: the abilities to make decisions, to work with others (adult peers and subordinates, as well as supervisors and the obvious students), and to exercise judgment. A good department head has a broad outlook, professional attitudes and leadership ability. He has verbal ability--good administration is impossible with poor communication; he has reasoning ability, flexibility, self confidence, emotional maturity, social and ethical standards, proper work habits, and courage and decisiveness.

The literature indicates that superior personal and professional qualifications are necessary pre-requisites for any department head.

#### IV. DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

The literature on the department headship abounds with lists of suggested duties for department heads. Examples of such lists may be found in Novak,<sup>30</sup> Shouse,<sup>31</sup> Easterday,<sup>32</sup> and Stephenson.<sup>33</sup> This composite list by Garrett<sup>34</sup> shows the wide range of duties which fall under the responsibility of the high school department head.

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<sup>29</sup>Maczuga, op. cit., p. 240.

<sup>30</sup>Novak, op. cit., pp. 92-98.

<sup>31</sup>Shouse, op. cit., p. 165.

<sup>32</sup>Easterday, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

<sup>33</sup>Stephenson, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>34</sup>Garrett, op. cit., pp. 17-18.





### Duties of the Department Head

1. Organizing the department for instruction through:
  - (a) Grouping of students.
  - (b) Planning class schedules.
  - (c) Determining what is to be taught, by whom, where, and in what sequence or pattern.
2. Staffing the department:
  - (a) Introducing and orienting new teachers.
  - (b) Assigning teachers to appropriate activities in the department.
  - (c) Assisting substitute teachers in carrying out their assigned duties.
  - (d) Participating in the selection of new staff members.
3. Evaluating:
  - (a) Determining standards and measurements of results.
  - (b) Supervising and co-ordinating the testing program within the department.
  - (c) Making periodic evaluation of the instructional methods used in the department.
  - (d) Providing the administration with evaluation reports of department members.
  - (e) Maintaining vigilance relative to the working conditions of the staff.
4. Communicating:
  - (a) Acting as the liaison between the administration and the teachers; between the teachers and the pupils, between the department and the other departments in the school.
  - (b) Acquainting the teachers with departmental and school policies.
  - (c) Conducting his department's correspondence.
  - (d) Preparing notices and information bulletins for his department.
  - (e) Seeing that minutes of departmental meetings are distributed to all members of the department.
5. Providing material and equipment:
  - (a) Ordering, maintaining, replacing, distributing appropriate instructional material and equipment.
  - (b) Assisting teachers with respect to the proper and effective use of equipment.
  - (c) Maintaining an inventory of supplies and equipment in the department.
6. Providing instructional leadership by:
  - (a) Interpreting the subject curriculum to the department.



- (b) Informing department members of recent educational developments.
  - (c) Promoting and planning appropriate in-service training.
  - (d) Giving assistance to teachers in the solution of instructional problems.
  - (e) Offering suggestions relative to planning lessons, using materials and equipment, developing testing procedures.
  - (f) Demonstrating different teaching methods by inviting and arranging for staff members to visit his classes.
7. Supervising through:
- (a) Visiting the classes of staff members. Note: The purpose of such visits is not intended to be inspectorial but rather to offer help and encouragement to the teachers.
  - (b) Reviewing periodically the progress being made by the teachers in handling the subject matter.
  - (c) Reviewing the test results with teachers.

## V. THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD POSITION

The literature offers some contradiction concerning the relative advantages and disadvantages of the department head position. While some writers consider some aspects of the department head position as advantageous, other writers find the same aspects of the position disadvantageous. The greatest diversity of opinion occurs between the supervisory and administrative functions of the department head position.

### The Advantages of the Department Head Position

Novak<sup>35</sup> feels that ". . . the department head is almost unique in his three-fold responsibility for administrative, supervisory, and

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<sup>35</sup>Novak, op. cit., p. 91.





instructional functions." Because of this unique position, the department head is fortunate to have a voice in all levels of the high school organization.

The department head also has a distinct advantage in being a liaison agent within the organization. Satlow states:<sup>36</sup>

He is in effect the middle man in the two-way communication that is operative between the administration and the department. He presents the department point of view to the school administration and the administrator's point of view to the department. He considers departmental decisions as mandates for activity on his part and sees to it that the decisions are implemented by teachers in the classroom.

Gruman<sup>37</sup> also emphasizes the liaison quality of the department head position by stating that ". . . their liaison position, enhanced by the fact that they continue to teach courses offered in their departments, provides a powerful tool in the organization, integration, and coordination of classroom work."

The department head also has a unique supervisory advantage. Hipps cites four beneficial aspects:<sup>38</sup>

1. The department head is usually more accessible to the members of his department than are most other types of supervisors.
2. The department head generally has fewer people to supervise than has the ordinary supervisor.
3. The department head himself is actively engaged in teaching.
4. The department head has complete mastery of his particular

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<sup>36</sup>David Satlow, "Democracy in the Supervision of a High School Department" The Journal of Educational Sociology, XXXII:5, (January 1959), p. 222.

<sup>37</sup>Gruman, op. cit., p. 169.

<sup>38</sup>G. Melvin Hipps, "Supervision: A Basic Responsibility of the Department Head," The Clearing House, XXXIX:8, (April 1965), p. 488.





subject matter and is thus able to give relevant advice to members of his department.

Andrews suggests another advantage of the department head position:<sup>39</sup>

He coordinates curriculum development, grouping practices, pupil evaluation practices, and the like. He may well go beyond just coordinating to actual development of program improvements. The section coordinator (department head), however, as a resident specialist, has potential beyond program development. He is in a position to be highly effective in performing the consultation function and, in fact, as the position becomes more common this aspect of it may be expected to grow in importance.

Morwood-Clark and Faulds feel that the greatest advantage of the department head position is as follows:<sup>40</sup>

The department head finds his greatest goal in developing the creative potential of each staff member. By encouraging each department member individually and by publicizing each teacher's efforts, the department head can contribute to the sharing of ideas, experiences and materials by all, and all are thereby enriched. The greatest riches go to the students who get the advantage of superior teaching.

Thus, in the opinions of some writers, the position of high school department head has definite advantages.

### The Disadvantages of the Department Head Position

Some writers are critical of the system of departmentalization and of department heads.

Easterday<sup>41</sup> suggests that the position does lead to "departmental self-interest" but it has yet to be determined whether this is

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<sup>39</sup>J. H. M. Andrews, "Who Shall Supervise?" (Paper delivered at the "Canadian Education Association" Short Course, Banff, Alberta, May 20, 1960), p. 8.

<sup>40</sup>Morwood-Clark and Faulds, op. cit., p. 401.

<sup>41</sup>Easterday, op. cit., p. 85.



good or bad.

Hammock and Owings<sup>42</sup> maintain that " . . . the position has been condemned because it has a natural tendency to emphasize subject matter sometimes to the exclusion of the integrative purposes of the whole school program." These authors also cite four examples of the negative products of strict departmentalization:<sup>43</sup>

1. It may allow aims that are mutually contradictory.
2. It may not be conducive to integration within pupils.
3. It may not be conducive to emphasis upon changed behavior in the pupil as a whole personality.
4. It may emphasize academic progress to the near or actual conclusion of other valid objectives.

Hammock and Owings<sup>44</sup> also feel that in departmentalized programs " . . . there was a tendency among department heads to emphasize teaching processes--rather than developing individuals."

Kidd<sup>45</sup> feels that the role of the department head calls for too much administrative-supervisory overlapping. He also feels that isolation of departments is not a good educational practice.

Morwood-Clark and Faulds<sup>46</sup> suggest that " . . . the fact that

<sup>42</sup>Robert C. Hammock and Ralph S. Owings, Supervising Instruction in Secondary Schools. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1955), p. 81.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>45</sup>Jim L. Kidd, "The Department Headship and the Supervisory Role," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, LXIX:303, (October 1965), p. 74.

<sup>46</sup>Morwood-Clark and Faulds, op. cit., p. 398.





the principal has any number of details removed from his direct control, leaves him behind, isolated and out of contact."

Several writers suggest that the role of the department head is not clearly enunciated; the limits of the duties and responsibilities of the department head are hazy and obscure.

Clement<sup>47</sup> warns that a department can easily become a vested interest which strives to outdo other departments rather than to cooperate with them. He also states that instructional methods and materials are jealously guarded--rather than being shared by all departments.

Finally, Kidd<sup>48</sup> indicates that the position of department head has become static:

Except for terminology, the lists (lists of duties of department heads) are much the same for the 1930, 1948 and 1959 study. Therefore, it seems that the duties and responsibilities of the department head have changed little in the past thirty-two years. This again may be another indication that the potential of the position has not been tapped.

## VI. THE ROLE CONFLICT OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

The literature seems to imply that the department head frequently experiences "role conflict" in the performance of his duties.

This "role conflict" is best defined by Getzels as:<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Clement, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>48</sup>Kidd, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>49</sup>Jacob W. Getzels, James M. Lipham and Roald F. Campbell, Educational Administration as a Social Process. (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 113.





A variety of conflicts occur when a role incumbent has to conform simultaneously to a number of expectations which are mutually exclusive, contradictory, or inconsistent so that the performance of one set of duties makes performance of another set impossible, or at least difficult.

A brief survey of the literature will describe some of the duties of the department head in which this role conflict is inherent.

Role conflict, according to Jensen,<sup>50</sup> often occurs when department heads are responsible for all the instructional procedures of the department but yet are not permitted to make recommendations to the principal regarding the placement of classes or the teaching assignments for members of the department.

Garrett<sup>51</sup> reports that department heads are not sure if their position is one of a "line" or a "staff" function; therefore, conflict arises between limits of authority and responsibility.

Koch<sup>52</sup> feels that department heads are "administratively impotent" because all their administrative responsibilities are first cleared through the principal--leaving the department head to perform duties which are relatively unimportant.

Department heads who are "master teachers" find conflict of role when they are required to spend their time completing limitless clerical tasks instead of assisting other members of the department

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<sup>50</sup>Jensen, op. cit., p. 285.

<sup>51</sup>Garrett, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>52</sup>Harlan C. Koch, "Is the Department Headship in Secondary Schools a Professional Myth?" School Review, XXXVIII:5, (May 1930), p. 339.



with new teaching techniques and instructional research.<sup>53</sup>

Morwood-Clark and Faulds<sup>54</sup> also suggest that the department head is an "inbetweener" who finds it difficult to hold the confidence of the members of his department and also the respect of the administration.

Several writers reported that serious role conflict occurs when department heads are asked, on one hand, to assist classroom teachers with instructional problems, and, on the other hand, are asked to evaluate teachers of the department on behalf of the high school principal.

The professional training of the department heads usually prepares them to be single subject specialists; Koch<sup>55</sup> implies that newly appointed department heads create an immediate role conflict when they are expected to assume department head functions for which they are totally unprepared.

Manlove and Buser<sup>56</sup> report that role conflict is evident among department heads because ". . . teachers, principals, and department heads do not always have the same perceptions of policy and procedures in the process of supervision."

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<sup>53</sup>Morwood-Clark and Faulds, op. cit., p. 399.

<sup>54</sup>Morwood-Clark and Faulds, op. cit., p. 398.

<sup>55</sup>Harlan C. Koch, "Some Aspects of the Department Headship in Secondary Schools," School Review, XXXVIII:4, (April 1930), pp. 272-275.

<sup>56</sup>Manlove and Buser, op. cit., p. 103.



A department head is responsible for the supervision of all members of his department, and yet several writers state that many department heads are not given released time from the classroom to carry out these supervisory tasks.

Finally, Getzels<sup>57</sup> states that role conflict occurs when there is " . . . contradiction between the expectations for two or more roles which an individual is occupying at the same time." The literature suggests that department heads often are asked to perform at least three roles at one time--administrator, supervisor, and instructor--and thus role conflict would seem to be an ever-present frustration to high school department heads.

## VII. A SUMMARY OF RELATED STUDIES CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT HEADSHIP

Educational research into the position of the high school department head has been very limited in the United States and almost non-existent in Canada. A detailed description of all of the major research studies concerning the department headship will be found in the three companion studies completed in 1966 by Buser,<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Getzels, op. cit., p. 113.

<sup>58</sup>Robert L. Buser, "The Functions and Characteristics of Department Heads as Perceived by High School Principals," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966), pp. 16-24.







Ciminillo,<sup>59</sup> and Brenner.<sup>60</sup>

A summary of some of the major studies completed in U. S. A. from 1930 to 1966 is indicated in Table I.

The first major study by Koch in 1930 was comprehensive and established the framework for many of the research studies that followed. Some studies attempted only to survey the extent of the position of the department headship within the high schools of a specific area; whereas, other studies were concerned only with the supervisory functions of the position. Most studies contained many subjective opinions about the relative merits of the department headship.

The literature also alludes to numerous minor studies of a regional nature, (Kammerer in Detroit in 1947 and Norman in Seattle in 1956), which attempted to describe the nature and the extent of the department headship within a relatively small geographic area.

Thus, a survey of the related studies reveals a lack of sufficient research in depth into the position of department head. As more schools in the United States and Canada introduce the position of department head into the high school organization, there will have to be much more extensive research into the role and the function of the department headship.

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<sup>59</sup>Lewis M. Ciminillo, "The Department Heads' Perception of the Functions and Characteristics of Their Position," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966), pp. 16-24.

<sup>60</sup>Kenneth W. Brenner, "Functions and Characteristics of Department Heads as Perceived by Public High School Teachers," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966), pp. 19-30.



TABLE I

MAJOR RESEARCH STUDIES REPORTED FROM 1930 to 1966  
CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT HEADSHIP IN U. S. A.

Name of Researcher	Year	Sample	Brief description of the Study
Koch	1930	171 principals 311 superintendents 910 department heads	Comprehensive survey of the department headship gathered from 171 high schools in 114 cities in the U. S. A.
Barr and Reppen	1935	367 teachers	Teacher attitudes toward the supervisory functions of the department head.
Raubinger	1946	176 principals	Follow-up of the Koch Study of 1930.
Axley	1947	? department heads	The department head in 50 schools in U. S. A.
A. S. C. D. <sup>a</sup>	1948	124 department heads	The supervisory aspects of the department head position gathered by N. E. A.
Brandes	1950	105 principals	The function of the department head in the high schools of California.
King and Moon	1960	208 school systems	General information about the department headship in public high schools.
Easterday	1965	? principals ? superintendents ? department heads	Survey of the department head position in 11 schools in the U. S. A.
Thomas	1966	teachers in 8 high schools in Chicago	Comparison between organization by department and organization by division.
Stern	1966	674 teachers and department heads	The role of the department head in the improvement of instruction in the secondary schools in Los Angeles.
Buser	1966	215 principals	A group of three companion studies to compare the functions and characteristics of department heads as perceived by high school principals, by teachers, and by department heads.
Ciminillo Brenner		332 department heads 621 teachers	

<sup>a</sup> Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.





## VIII. SUMMARY

The literature reviewed in this chapter has yielded the following generalizations:

1. Although many reasons have been cited for the introduction of department heads, the most frequently recurring one is that department heads were introduced into high schools mainly to assist in the improvement and coordination of classroom instruction.

2. The selection procedures used to appoint department heads need to be based on a knowledge of functions which department heads perform; the principal should be a key figure in the selection of department heads.

3. Department heads should be creative teachers of excellent calibre who also exhibit dynamic qualities of leadership, emotional maturity and professionalism.

4. The main advantage of the department head position is as a communication link between the administration and the classroom teachers; whereas, the main disadvantage of the position is the concurrent isolation of subject area departments and the fragmentation of the total high school organization.

5. The duties of the department head are administrative, supervisory, instructional, and clerical in nature.

6. The department head faces role conflict when he is expected to occupy two or more contradictory or opposing roles simultaneously.

7. The related studies concerning the department headship





are meager in the United States and negligible in Canada.

Thus, this review of the literature provides a background of diversified information and opinion about the position of high school department head.



## CHAPTER III

### THE DESIGN

#### I. INSTRUMENTATION

The data for the study were obtained by the use of two instruments: the General Information Survey, and the Department Head Questionnaire. These instruments are described below.

##### General Information Survey (See Appendix G)

This questionnaire was designed to gather information from the superintendents of Alberta school districts, divisions and counties regarding such aspects as the number of department heads employed, the subject areas for which department heads are designated, the methods of selection of department heads, the length of appointment for department heads, the remuneration for department heads and the job specifications for department heads. There was also an opportunity for the superintendents to make comments regarding the strengths, and improvements needed in the position of high school department head in Alberta.

This General Information Survey consisted of fifteen fixed-response answers and four open-ended responses.

##### The Department Head in the High Schools of Alberta (See Appendix H)

This instrument was developed to gather information from Alberta high school department heads regarding the nature of their positions. The questionnaire consisted of six distinct parts each of



which attempted to describe various aspects of the department headship. A brief description of each part of the questionnaire follows:

1. Part One - Biographical Data

This section gathered information to determine sex, age, university training, teaching experience, administrative experience, and other professional qualifications of incumbent department heads.

2. Part Two - The Nature of the Position of Department Head

This section contained all the questions pertaining to the nature of the position in relation to the organization. These questions attempted to ascertain the size of the high school, the type of instructional year, the number of teachers in each department, the subject area of responsibility, the amount of released time from the classroom, and the provision of clerical help for the department heads.<sup>1</sup>

3. Part Three - The Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads

This section allowed space for a listing of five actual duties performed by department heads in high schools. Nine categories for summarizing the responses were developed.

4. Part Four - The Suggested Functions of Department Heads

This section was an adaptation of a questionnaire developed by Robert L. Buser for a doctoral dissertation at Indiana University in

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<sup>1</sup>Many of these question areas appeared in a research study completed by Lewis M. Ciminillo, "The Department Heads' Perception of the Functions and Characteristics of Their Position." (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966), p. 132. Also see Appendix A.





1966.<sup>2</sup> Permission was granted by Dr. Buser for the use of his instrument in this study. (See Appendix A) Only twenty-five statements were retained from the original Buser instrument; many modifications were made to fit the instrument to the Alberta high school situation. The respondents were asked to examine the twenty-five functions of the department head and determine whether the suggested functions should or should not be functions of the high school department head.

#### 5. Part Five - Criteria for the Selection of Department Heads

This section was taken verbatim from the Robert Buser questionnaire. The respondents were asked to pick the four most important criteria, and the four least important criteria for the selection of department heads. The basic list contained twelve criteria of qualities appropriate for department heads.

#### 6. Part Six - Opinions Regarding the Position of Department Head

This section contained open-ended questions relating to the position of department head. The respondents were asked to comment on the strengths, the weaknesses, and the possible improvements of the position of department head in Alberta. These opinions later were grouped into categories.

The department head questionnaire consisted of fifty-six fixed-response answers and four open-end answers.

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<sup>2</sup>Robert L. Buser, "The Functions and Characteristics of Department Heads as Perceived by High School Principals." (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966), p. 128.



## II. THE SAMPLE

Since no list of Alberta department heads was available, the sample had to be arrived at in the following manner.

By means of a "Data Retrieval System for Alberta Schools,"<sup>3</sup> a total of fifty-eight high schools, numbering twenty-five teachers or more, was compiled. These fifty-eight schools were grouped into the following three categories, depending upon the size of the high school teaching staff:

Small-sized high schools . . . . .	32
(25 to 49 teachers)	
Medium-sized high schools . . . . .	19
(50 to 79 teachers)	
Large-sized high schools . . . . .	7
(80 teachers or more)	

These fifty-eight high schools were then sorted according to respective school districts, divisions, and counties. Table II indicates the placement of these fifty-eight schools.

The General Information Survey was then mailed to each of the twenty-four superintendents whose districts, divisions and counties contained the fifty-eight high schools. (See Appendix B and G)

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<sup>3</sup>This system was devised by graduate students G. Hawley and W. L. Workman in January 1969. Each of Alberta's operating public schools (approximately 1500) was listed on a separate data card. The following data were recorded for each school: name, address, number of school district, division or county, principal's name, number of classrooms, number of teachers, number of grades, and other pertinent information. Special computer programs were then set up for retrieval of any specific set of schools required for research purposes.



TABLE II  
DISTRIBUTION OF HIGH SCHOOLS<sup>a</sup>  
IN ALBERTA DISTRICTS,  
DIVISIONS AND COUNTIES

Name of District, Division, County	Number <sup>b</sup> of Schools
Edmonton Public School District #7	10
Calgary Public School District #19	11
Lethbridge Public School District #51	2
Medicine Hat Public School District #76	2
Red Deer Public School District #104	2
Wetaskiwin Public School District #264	1
Camrose Public School District #1315	1
Stettler School District #1475	1
Calgary R. C. School District #1	4
Edmonton R. C. School District #7	6
Lethbridge R. C. School District #9	1
County of Vulcan #2	1
County of Ponoka #3	2
County of Athabasca #12	1
County of Lacombe #14	1
County of Mountain View #17	2
County of Strathcona #20	3
County of Red Deer #23	1
County of Minburn #27	1
Taber School Division #6	1
Stony Plain School Division #23	1
Pincher Creek School Division #29	1
Westlock School Division #37	1
Drumheller Valley School Division #62	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58</b>

<sup>a</sup>These high schools identified by means of "Data Retrieval System for Alberta Schools."

<sup>b</sup>Each high school employed twenty-five or more teachers.







After receiving replies from all of the twenty-four superintendents, the following data were compiled:

1. Fourteen districts, divisions and counties did not employ high school department heads.
2. Ten districts, divisions and counties did employ high school department heads.
3. The ten school districts, divisions, and counties employed a total of two hundred and twenty high school department heads, of which one hundred and seventy-four were men and forty-six were women.
4. High school department heads were employed in eleven small-sized high schools, eighteen medium-sized high schools and seven large-sized high schools--a total of thirty-six schools in all.

The actual sample of two hundred and twenty department heads was less than the anticipated sample of approximately two hundred and fifty department heads which would have been the possible total if all fifty-eight high schools had employed department heads.

### III. THE COLLECTION OF THE DATA

The steps followed in the collection of the data for this study were:

1. The General Information Survey, with an accompanying cover letter, was mailed to the twenty-four superintendents of Alberta school districts, divisions, and counties on February 28, 1969. These superintendents were asked to complete the General Information Survey and also to grant permission for the researcher to



distribute questionnaires to all department heads employed by their school district, division or county. A stamped, self-addressed envelope was included for the convenience of each superintendent. (These returns will be discussed in Chapter IV of this study.)

2. Follow-up letters were mailed to eight superintendents. (See Appendix E) One follow-up telephone call was also necessary. All twenty-four superintendents replied to the General Information Survey by March 31, 1969.

3. As soon as permission was granted by the superintendents, the department heads' questionnaires were mailed. The first packages of questionnaires were mailed on March 13, 1969.

4. One package of department heads' questionnaires was mailed to the principal of each of the thirty-six high schools in the survey. A cover letter to the principal explained the research. (See Appendix C) The principal was asked to distribute one questionnaire to each department head on his high school staff; he was not asked to collect the questionnaires.

5. Each department head received a cover letter, a questionnaire, and a stamped, pre-addressed envelope. (See Appendix D and H) The department heads could choose to respond, or not respond, according to their predilection.

6. A follow-up letter was mailed on April 11, 1969, to all the thirty-six high school principals, expressing appreciation for their cooperation in the distribution of the questionnaires. (See Appendix F) (A total of two hundred and twenty department head questionnaires was mailed.)



7. The majority of the department head questionnaires, (75%) was returned by Friday, April 11, 1969. The final deadline for all department head questionnaires was set for May 2, 1969.

#### IV. THE RETURNS

Table III shows the number of questionnaires mailed and the number and per cent of usable returns. All twenty-four questionnaires were returned by the superintendents. The department heads returned one hundred and eighty-one usable questionnaires; four additional questionnaires could not be used.

The per cent return of the department head questionnaires by sex was as follows: male department heads, 80% and female department heads, 91%.

In addition, the per cent return of the department head questionnaires by school size was as follows: small-sized high schools, 72%; medium-sized schools, 89%; and large-sized high schools, 74%. (Table IV)

Responses were received from department heads in each of the thirty-six high schools in the sample; a one hundred per cent return of questionnaires was received from fifteen of the schools.

#### V. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The information for this study was gathered from two different questionnaires; therefore, the treatment of the data was handled by means of separate techniques. A brief description of the data analysis of each instrument follows.







TABLE III  
NUMBER AND PER CENT OF USABLE RETURNS,  
BY CLASS AND SEX OF RESPONDENT

Class of Respondent	Number of Questionnaires Mailed		Number of Usable Returns		Per cent <sup>a</sup> of Usable Returns
Superintendent	M- 24	Total - 24	M- 24	Total - 24	100
	F - 0		F- 0		
Department Heads	M-174	Total - 220	M-139	Total - 181	82
	F- 46		F- 42		
		Total - 244			Total - 205
					84

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole numbers.



TABLE IV

NUMBER AND PER CENT OF USABLE RETURNS FROM  
DEPARTMENT HEADS ONLY, REPORTED BY  
SEX AND SIZE OF HIGH SCHOOL

Department Heads - (Sex and Size of School)	Number of Questionnaires Mailed	Number of Usable Returns	Per cent <sup>a</sup> of Usable Returns
Male	174	139	80
Female	46	42	91
Small-sized high schools	43	31	72
Medium-sized high schools	123	110	89
Large-sized high schools	54	40	74

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole numbers.



### General Information Survey (See Appendix)

This survey sheet was sent to twenty-four superintendents of Alberta school districts, divisions and counties. The data received from these twenty-four questionnaires provided an overview of the department head position in high schools with twenty-five or more teachers for the province of Alberta. Chapter IV of this study is devoted to the information provided by the superintendents.

The data from these survey sheets were tabulated manually. Tables were constructed which indicated the districts and divisions that employed department heads, the number of male and female department heads, the number of department heads in small-sized, medium-sized and large-sized high schools, and the major subject areas for which department heads were responsible. The open-ended questions provided additional general background information for this study.

No statistical treatment of the data from the General Information Survey was attempted.

### The Department Head in the High Schools of Alberta (See Appendix)

The data obtained from each department head questionnaire were transcribed to I. B. M. cards. Fixed-alternative responses were transferred directly; open-end responses were recorded manually, forced into nine major categories and then transferred to data cards. Frequency distributions and percentages were first obtained for the total number of respondents. The frequency distributions were then obtained for the department heads of small-sized, medium-





sized and large-sized high schools.

Many of the responses were ranked by school size according to the frequency of responses. The Spearman rho rank correlations were then calculated to ascertain the degree of relationship between the rank orders.

The responses to the "actual duties" of the department head were recorded manually and then forced into nine major categories. Fifteen dependent variables were then compared to the "actual duties" performed by the department heads and cross tabulation charts developed.

The statistical treatment of the data from the department head questionnaire involved a total of sixty-nine variables--twenty dependent variables and forty-nine independent variables.

## VI. SUMMARY

This study obtained information from selected Alberta school superintendents and high school department heads by the use of two different questionnaires. The collection of data began in January 1969 and was completed by June 1969. Usable replies were received from twenty-four school superintendents and one hundred and eighty-one high school department heads. The treatment of the data involved both manual tabulation and computer analysis of returns.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE GENERAL INFORMATION SURVEY

This chapter presents the data obtained from the twenty-four superintendents of Alberta school districts, divisions and counties regarding the nature of the position of the high school department head in schools with twenty-five or more teachers. The General Information Survey was completed either by the superintendents themselves or by senior high school officials designated by the superintendents. A one hundred per cent return of the General Information Survey resulted.

#### I. SUPERINTENDENTS' RESPONSES

##### Districts, Divisions and Counties Employing Department Heads

Table V indicates that ten out of the twenty-four school districts, divisions and counties employed department heads; whereas, fourteen school districts, divisions and counties did not employ department heads. Two school systems, an urban school district and a rural county, indicated that subject coordinators were designated by their school boards instead of department heads. The ten school boards employing department heads consisted of eight urban districts, one rural county and one rural school division.

The nature of the size of the high schools employing department heads is listed in Table VI. Fifty per cent of the total number of high schools employing department heads were of medium size, i. e., fifty to seventy-nine teachers.



TABLE V  
ALBERTA SCHOOL DISTRICTS, DIVISIONS AND COUNTIES  
EMPLOYING DEPARTMENT HEADS

Name of Area	Number of High Schools <sup>a</sup>	Number of Department Heads
Edmonton Public School District #7	10	88
Calgary Public School District #19	11	48
Lethbridge Public School District #51	2	12
Medicine Hat Public School District #76	2	12
Red Deer Public School District #104	2	6
Wetaskiwin Public School District #264	1	4
Camrose Public School District #1315	1	0
Stettler School District #1475	1	0
Calgary R. C. School District #1	4	0 <sup>b</sup>
Edmonton R. C. School District #7	6	40
Lethbridge R. C. School District #9	1	3
County of Vulcan #2	1	0
County of Ponoka #3	2	0
County of Athabasca #12	1	3
County of Lacombe #14	1	0
County of Mountain View #17	2	0
County of Strathcona #20	3	0 <sup>b</sup>
County of Red Deer #23	1	0
County of Minburn #27	1	0
Taber School Division #6	1	4
Stony Plain School Division #23	1	0
Pincher Creek School Division #29	1	0
Westlock School Division #37	1	0
Drumheller Valley School Division #62	1	0
TOTAL	58	220

<sup>a</sup>Twenty-five or more teachers.

<sup>b</sup>Subject coordinators were employed by these school districts and counties.





TABLE VI  
NATURE OF THE SIZE OF HIGH SCHOOLS  
EMPLOYING DEPARTMENT HEADS

Name of Area	Small <sup>a</sup> Sized High School	Medium <sup>b</sup> Sized High School	Large <sup>c</sup> Sized High School	TOTAL
1. Edmonton Public School District #7	0	7	3	10
2. Calgary Public School District #19	1	6	3	10
3. Lethbridge Public School District #51	1	1	0	2
4. Medicine Hat Public School District #76	1	1	0	2
5. Red Deer Public School District #104	1	1	0	2
6. Wetaskiwin Public School District #264	1	0	0	1
7. Edmonton R. C. School District #7	3	2	1	6
8. Lethbridge R. C. School District #9	1	0	0	1
9. County of Athabasca #12	1	0	0	1
10. Taber School Division #6	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	11	18	7	36

<sup>a</sup>Small-sized high school: 25-49 teachers.

<sup>b</sup>Medium-sized high school: 50-79 teachers.

<sup>c</sup>Large-sized high school: 80 teachers or more.



### Reasons for the Introduction of the Position of Department Head

In the ten school systems in which department heads were employed, the superintendents listed varying reasons for the institution of the position of department head into the high school organization. Some of the recurring responses for the introduction of the department head were as follows:

1. The department head might assist the principal in the improvement of instruction since the principal was not able to give instructional direction in all the diverse high school subject areas.
2. The department head might serve as a communication link between the principal and the teachers.
3. The department head might coordinate and assist in the school instructional program.
4. The department head might assist in the in-service training of new teachers.
5. The department head might assist the principal in the maintenance of special equipment and the requisitioning of special supplies.

### Reasons for Not Employing Department Heads

The superintendents of the fourteen school districts, divisions and counties which did not employ department heads offered many reasons why departmentalization had not yet taken place. Seven of the superintendents suggested that the high schools in their areas were still too small for the introduction of department heads. Other



responses included the following:

1. Four superintendents indicated that the department head system may be introduced in the next few years.
2. One superintendent responded that the department head system will be introduced into the high schools of his area in September, 1969.
3. Two superintendents reported the use of subject coordinators instead of department heads.
4. Several superintendents revealed that there were not enough subject specialists who were capable of acting as department heads.
5. Several superintendents felt that the department head position had not as yet proved its effectiveness.
6. Two superintendents suggested that teachers were already given sufficient preparation time and that extra released time for department heads would not seem to be necessary.
7. One superintendent stated that the cost of instituting the department head system should not be overlooked.
8. One superintendent replied that his experienced high school teachers acted as master teachers, and by so doing, probably served the purpose of department heads.

#### Year of Introduction of Department Head System

The ten superintendents whose school boards employed department heads reported that the department head system was





introduced to the ten school systems within the last fifteen years. The following list indicates the approximate year of introduction of the department head system:

1955	Medicine Hat Public School District #76
1958	Calgary Public School District #19
1958	Lethbridge Public School District #51
1962	Wetaskiwin Public School District #264
1963	Edmonton R. C. School District #7
1964	Taber School Division #6
1965	Edmonton Public School District #7
1966	Red Deer Public School District #104
1968	Lethbridge R. C. School District #9
1968	County of Athabasca #12

Many of these school districts, divisions and counties had operated with a system of subject coordinators prior to the institution of the system of department heads into their schools.

### Sex of Department Heads

The superintendents reported a total possible number of two hundred and twenty department heads employed in the thirty-six selected high schools of twenty-five or more teachers. More men than women were designated as department heads; four school systems employed male department heads only. Table VII summarizes the percentage of male and female department heads employed by ten Alberta school systems. (A more detailed discussion of the male and female incumbents will appear in Chapter V of this study.)



TABLE VII

PERCENTAGE OF MALE AND FEMALE DEPARTMENT HEADS  
EMPLOYED BY TEN ALBERTA SCHOOL DISTRICTS,  
DIVISIONS AND COUNTIES

Name of Area	Male	Per Cent	Female	Per Cent	TOTAL	PER CENT <sup>a</sup>
Edmonton Public School District #7	69	78	19	22	88	100
Calgary Public School District #19	39	81	9	19	48	100
Lethbridge Public School District #51	9	75	3	25	12	100
Medicine Hat Public School District #76	10	83	2	17	12	100
Red Deer Public School District #104	3	50	3	50	6	100
Wetaskiwin Public School District #264	4	100	0	0	4	100
Edmonton R. C. School District #7	30	75	10	25	40	100
Lethbridge R. C. School District #9	3	100	0	0	3	100
County of Athabasca #12	3	100	0	0	3	100
Taber School Division #6	4	100	0	0	4	100
TOTAL	174	79	46	21	220	100

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



### Department Heads' Subject Areas of Responsibility

Each of the ten superintendents listed the various subject areas for which department heads were responsible. Table VIII summarizes the major subject areas for which department heads were designated. The subject areas of Social Studies, English, Science, and Business Education were listed with the highest frequency; the subject areas of Home Economics, Religion and Student Activities were less frequently listed. Other subject areas for which department heads were responsible were as follows:

Music	Building Construction
Industrial Arts	Building Maintenance
Food Services	Beauty Culture
Automotives	Horticulture
Industrial Metals	Home Management

One superintendent stated that it was a board policy to combine more than one subject area for one department head; whereas, six superintendents indicated that subject areas were never combined under one department headship. Three superintendents suggested that it was their board policy occasionally to group subject areas together for greater expediency and efficiency.

### Terms of Employment for Department Heads

Department heads were selected in two main ways. Six superintendents reported that department heads were appointed by the superintendent, upon the high school principal's recommendation. The remaining four superintendents noted that department heads were usually appointed from applications submitted to the School Board by all interested high school teachers. One superintendent added that the







TABLE VIII

MAJOR SUBJECT AREAS FOR WHICH DEPARTMENT  
HEADS ARE DESIGNATED

Name of Area	Eng-lish	Social Studies	Mathe- matics	Sci- ence	Busi- ness Educ.	Language (Foreign and Modern)	Guid- ance	Physi- cal Educ.	Voc. and Tech. Educ.	Home Eco- no- mics	Reli- gion	Stu- dent Acti- ties	Other
Edmonton Pub- lic S.D. #7	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Calgary Pub- lic S.D. #19	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
Lethbridge Public S.D. #51	x	x	x	x	x	x		x					
Medicine Hat Public S.D. #76	x	x	x	x	x				x				
Red Deer Pub- lic S.D. #104	x	x	x	x	x				x				
Wetaskiwin Public S.D. #264		x	x	x	x	x							
Edmonton R.C. S.D. #7	x	x	x	x	x				x		x	x	
Lethbridge R.C. S.D. #9	x										x		
County of Athabasca #12				x	x				x				
Taber School Division #6	x	x		x		x						x	



high school principal was usually consulted regarding the final selection of department heads.

The length of the term of appointment for department heads varied greatly within the ten school districts, divisions and counties. Four school systems indicated that the department head position was a permanent one. Two school superintendents reported that although the department head was a permanent position, it was still subject to annual review by the school board. Two superintendents stated that the tenure for their department heads was one year in length, subject to annual review by the school board. Only one school district indicated a two-year appointment for department heads.

Eight of the ten superintendents revealed that department heads were subject to school board policies and rules regarding the position. Two school systems indicated that there were no written statements of duties or board policies to cover the position of department heads; however, one of these two systems reported that individual high schools developed their own frames of reference for department heads.

Additional salary was paid to all department heads in the ten school districts, divisions and counties. The highest allowance paid to department heads was \$800.00 per year, while the lowest allowance was \$300.00 per year. The median allowance for all department heads employed by Alberta school districts, divisions and counties was \$560.00.

In addition to the salary allowance paid to department heads, all ten school districts, divisions and counties provided released time for department heads. This released time generally amounted to thirty



to sixty minutes per day for each department head. In school systems operating on the semester type of instructional organization, the released time provided for department heads was sixty to ninety minutes per day for each department head. This released time did not include normal classroom preparation time.

In-service education for department heads was reported by only one school system. Nine superintendents indicated that there was no in-service education for department heads.

Four of the superintendents from urban centres indicated that department heads met regularly on a system-wide basis. Department heads from smaller population centres did not meet on a system-wide basis.

#### Strengths of the Department Head Position

The ten superintendents were given an opportunity to express their opinions about the position of department head as viewed from their personal perspectives. The following statements, ranked in order of frequency of response, were representative of the superintendents' responses:

<u>Strengths of Department Head Position</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
1. The department head aided in the in-service education of the new teachers.	5
2. The department head provided contact between administration and teachers.	4
3. The department head supplied necessary coordination of various courses offered by departments.	4
4. The department head was a leader in curriculum development.	3







5.	The department head concentrated on the improvement of classroom instruction.	3
6.	The department head assisted the administration in the preparation of the budget and the ordering of supplies and equipment.	3
7.	The department head provided closer contact within staff and provided opportunity for better staff relations.	2
8.	The department head provided administrative help for the principal.	2
9.	The department head assisted administration in the informal evaluation of members of the department.	1
10.	The department head was a leader in the adaptation of new courses for various types of students.	1

#### Opinions Expressed About the Position of Department Heads

The ten superintendents also reported their opinions in open-ended questions about improvements which should be made in the department headship. In addition, several respondents suggested possible weaknesses in the department head position. Only two opinions occurred more than once. The following statements represented the wide range of perceptions by superintendents concerning the department head position:

#### Improvements and Weaknesses in the Department Head Position

	<u>Frequency</u>
1. More department heads should be employed.	2
2. The department heads should have more in-service training before accepting the position.	2



- |     |  |   |
|-----|--|---|
| 3.  | Classroom visitation by department heads to assist new teachers should be used more extensively.   | 1 |
| 4.  | Department heads should be given more "line" responsibility.   | 1 |
| 5.  | Department heads should have closer contact with students and their individual programs.   | 1 |
| 6.  | More system-wide coordination of department heads should be implemented.   | 1 |
| 7.  | Department heads should not have flexibility sacrificed in order to produce conformity of operation.   | 1 |
| 8.  | The department heads' extra pay is resented by other teachers.   | 1 |
| 9.  | The department head creates a divisive feeling among staff members and departments.  | 1 |
| 10. | The department heads should not be given more released time from the classroom; the school day should be lengthened and the department head paid for extra hours spent in administrative and supervisory duties. | 1 |
| 11. | Department heads should be given more time to develop greater areas of responsibility.   | 1 |
| 12. | No major improvements should be necessary for the department head position.  | 1 |

## II. SUMMARY

The General Information Survey, completed by twenty-four superintendents of Alberta school districts, divisions and counties, provided a background of information regarding the nature of the position of high school department head in schools with twenty-five or more teachers.

The data obtained answered the following questions:

1. Which school districts, divisions and counties employed



department heads?

2. What reasons were stated for the introduction of department heads?
3. In what years were department heads introduced?
4. How many male and female department heads were employed in Alberta?
5. For what subject areas were department heads designated?
6. What were some of the terms of employment for department heads in Alberta? (e. g., length of appointment, amount of released time from classroom, remuneration, amount of in-service education.)
7. What opinions were held by Alberta superintendents, or their designated senior officials, regarding the strengths, weaknesses and possible improvements of the department head system?





## CHAPTER V

### THE DEPARTMENT HEAD POSITION

This chapter is concerned with the description of the department headship in Alberta as revealed by responses to the department head questionnaire. (See Appendix H) These responses are discussed under the following headings: the nature of the high schools in the sample; the nature of the respondents; the nature of the position of department head and the criteria for the selection of high school department heads.

#### I. THE NATURE OF THE HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE SAMPLE

A total of thirty-six high schools was included in the survey. These schools represented eleven small-sized high schools, (31%), eighteen medium-sized high schools, (50%), and seven large-sized high schools (19%). Thirty-one schools or 86% of the sample contained Grades 10, 11 and 12, four schools or 11% contained Grades 7 to 12, and one special vocational high school or 3% contained Grades 9, 10 and 11.

The instructional program of these thirty-six schools varied considerably. Table IX shows that half of the high schools operated on a ten-month organizational basis but modifications of the school instructional year occurred in the other half of the high schools of the sample. One large-sized high school operated on an experimental split-semester basis for 1968-69 only.

The teaching staff of these thirty-six high schools ranged in



TABLE IX

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS OF HIGH SCHOOLS,  
REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 36

	Small <sup>a</sup> Schools		Medium <sup>b</sup> Schools		Large <sup>c</sup> Schools		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	Frequency	Per cent <sup>d</sup>
Ten month school year	6	55	13	72	0	0	19	53
Two semester school year	4	36	2	11	5	71	11	31
Experimental split- semester year	0	0	0	0	1	14	1	3
Trimester school year	1	9	1	6	0	0	2	5
Combination of ten month and semester school year	0	0	2	11	1	14	3	8
TOTAL	11	100	18	100	7	99	36	100

<sup>a</sup>Small-sized high school - 25 to 49 teachers.<sup>b</sup>Medium-sized high school - 50 to 79 teachers.<sup>c</sup>Large-sized high school - 80 teachers or more.<sup>d</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



size from twenty-five teachers to one hundred and forty teachers,

## II. THE NATURE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Information concerning the Alberta department headship was received from one hundred and eighty-one of the possible two hundred and twenty department heads.

Table X, reporting the sex of the department heads, shows that males outnumber females by about four to one. The small-sized high school employed a greater percentage of males than the medium or large-sized high school.

The median age for all department heads was in the 41-50 years category; however, the median age of department heads in the small-sized school was in the 31-40 years category. (Table XI). Only one department head was under 21 years of age while thirteen department heads were over 60 years of age. The median age for male department heads was in the 31-40 years category; the median age for female department heads was in the 41-50 years category.

The professional training of the department heads is summarized in Table XII. The median for professional training was two or more baccalaureate degrees but 25% of department heads also held a Master's degree. Fourteen department heads indicated that they were in the process of working toward a Master's degree. Two department heads held no degree; whereas, two department heads held a Doctor's degree.

Because department heads were specialists in certain subject areas their additional training represented a wide range of







TABLE X

SEX OF DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 181

Small School		Medium School		Large School		TOTAL		
Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent <sup>a</sup>	
Male	26	84	81	74	32	80	139	77
Female	5	16	29	26	8	20	42	23
TOTAL	31	100	110	100	40	100	181	100

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



TABLE XI

AGE OF DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 181

	Small School		Medium School		Large School		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent <sup>a</sup>
Under 21 years	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0
21 - 30 years	9	29	13	12	3	7	25	14
31 - 40 years	12	39	37	34	12	30	61	34
41 - 50 years	5	16	25	23	11	27	41	23
51 - 60 years	5	16	22	20	10	25	37	20
Over 60 years	0	0	11	10	2	5	13	7
No response	0	0	2	1	1	2	3	2
TOTAL	31	100	110	100	40	98	181	100

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



TABLE XII  
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 181

	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent <sup>a</sup>
No degree	1	3	1	1	0	0	2	1
One Bachelor's degree	10	32	34	31	16	40	60	33
Two or more Bachelors' degrees	12	39	32	29	8	20	52	29
One or more Bachelors' degrees and a Graduate Diploma	2	6	10	9	7	17	19	11
One or more Bachelors' degrees and a Master's degree	6	20	31	28	9	22	46	25
One Bachelor's degree, one Master's degree and one Doctor's degree	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	1
Total	31	100	110	100	40	99	181	100

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.





subject areas and disciplines. The following list includes some of the additional training and qualifications held by high school department heads:

- Degree in Theology
- Registered Nurse
- Bachelor's degree in Social Work
- Bachelor's degree in Commerce
- Master of Arts in Educational Administration
- Journeyman's Cook's papers
- Journeyman's papers - Industrial Arts
- Journeyman's papers - S. A. I. T.

- Specialized Reading Diploma
- Specialized Drama certificate
- Advanced Commercial certificate
- Bookkeeping, typing and shorthand certificates
- Dietetic Internship
- High School Assistant's Diploma
- Post-graduate training in art
- Post-graduate training in theological studies

These additional responses were indicated voluntarily by department heads; they did not necessarily represent the entire range of special training held by department heads.

Over 54% of department heads in Alberta possessed over twelve years of teaching experience and over 41% of this group had been teaching for over sixteen years. Table XIII shows the range of teaching experience for Alberta department heads.

The responses to "years of administrative experience," indicated a great amount of confusion concerning terms. Numerous respondents questioned whether the department headship was indeed an "administrative" position. Many respondents left this question blank. About 67% of those who answered this question reported that they possessed four years or less of administrative experience. (The term



TABLE XIII

DEPARTMENT HEADS YEARS OF TEACHING  
EXPERIENCE, REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 181

	Small School		Medium School		Large School		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent <sup>a</sup>
0 - years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2 - 4 years	6	19	12	11	3	7	21	12
5 - 8 years	6	19	16	14	6	15	28	15
9 - 12 years	8	26	19	17	7	17	34	19
13 - 16 years	3	10	12	11	8	20	23	13
Over 16 years	8	26	51	46	16	40	75	41
TOTAL	31	100	110	99	40	99	181	100

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



"administrative experience" should have been defined in order to obtain accurate responses to this question.)

Table XIV reveals that department heads' major amount of teaching experience had been gained at the high school level. Almost 41% of department heads had been employed in senior high schools for over twelve years, while an additional 39% had been teaching in senior high schools from five to twelve years.

The department heads also indicated that they had been teaching at their present high school for an average of four to eight years. About 18% of all department heads had been teaching in their present high school for over thirteen years.

### III. THE NATURE OF THE POSITION OF DEPARTMENT HEAD

About 67% of the one hundred and eighty-one department heads reported that they taught more than half-time, 20% reported that they taught exactly half-time and 13% reported that they taught less than half-time.

The position of department head is a relatively recent introduction into Alberta high schools because 73% of department heads reported that they had held their position for less than four years. Several respondents indicated that they had held the position of subject coordinator for several years previous to their appointment as a department head.

Table XV summarizes the major subject areas of responsibility for which male and female department heads are designated; the subject areas are also ranked by frequency of department head







TABLE XIV

DEPARTMENT HEADS' YEARS OF TEACHING  
EXPERIENCE IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL,  
REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 181

Teaching Experience in Senior High	Small School		Medium School		Large School		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent <sup>a</sup>
One year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2 - 4 years	7	22	23	21	4	10	34	19
5 - 8 years	8	26	17	15	10	25	35	19
9 - 12 years	8	26	20	18	9	22	37	20
13 - 16 years	3	10	13	12	3	7	19	11
Over 16 years	5	16	37	34	13	32	55	30
No response	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0
TOTAL	31	100	110	100	40	98	181	99

<sup>a</sup> All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



TABLE XV

DEPARTMENT HEADS' SUBJECT AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY,  
REPORTED BY FREQUENCY, BY SEX, AND BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 181

	Male		Female		Total		Total		Total		Total Male & Female Percent <sup>d</sup>
	S. <sup>a</sup>	M. <sup>b</sup>	L. <sup>c</sup>	Male	Percent	S.	M.	L.	Female	Percent	
English	4	8	1	13	48	2	9	3	14	52	27 100
Social Studies	6	11	5	22	85	0	2	2	4	15	26 100
Mathematics	5	10	5	20	87	0	3	0	3	13	23 100
Science	5	12	5	22	96	0	1	0	1	4	23 100
Business											
Education	3	10	2	15	71	2	3	1	6	29	21 100
Physical											
Education	1	9	4	14	100	0	0	0	0	0	14 100
Languages	0	3	2	5	45	0	6	0	6	54	11 99
Guidance	1	7	1	9	82	0	2	0	2	18	11 100
Technical-											
Vocational	0	6	4	10	100	0	0	0	0	0	10 100
Fine Arts	0	1	2	3	100	0	0	0	0	0	3 100
Religion	1	1	0	2	67	1	0	0	1	33	3 100
Others (p. 7)	0	3	1	4	44	0	3	2	5	56	9 100
Total	26	81	32	139	77	5	29	8	42	23	181 100

<sup>a</sup>Small-sized high school - 25 to 49 teachers.<sup>c</sup>Large-sized high schools - 80 teachers or more.<sup>b</sup>Medium-sized high school - 50 to 79 teachers.<sup>d</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



appointments.

Female department heads outnumbered male department heads in the subject areas of English, Foreign Languages, Girls' Vocational Courses and Student Activities.

Male department heads outnumbered female department heads in the subject areas of Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Business Education, Physical Education, Guidance, Technical-Vocational Courses, Fine Arts, Religion, Special Vocational Courses and Industrial Arts.

The subject areas of English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Business Education were reported as possessing department heads in greater frequency than other subject areas.

In addition to the sixteen major subject areas listed in Table XV, 11% of the respondents listed several combinations of subject areas for which department heads were designated. The following list includes some of the combinations of subject areas of responsibility:

- Foreign Languages and Fine Arts
- Industrial Arts and Home Economics
- Performing and Visual Arts
- Mathematics and Science
- English and Human Relations
- English and Social Studies
- English and Drama
- Social Studies and Drama
- Construction, Horticulture and Custodial
- Institutional Services
- Automotives and Industrial Metals
- Home Economics, Beauty Culture and Commercial Foods
- Food Services and Management
- Technologies

The usual size of departments for which the head was responsible was between five and eight teachers. About 7% of department







heads stated that they were responsible for departments of more than sixteen teachers; another 15% indicated that their departments consisted of less than four teachers.

The department heads of Alberta were usually provided with released time from the classroom to perform their duties. About 92% of the respondents indicated that they were provided with released time; an additional 6% were given no released time to perform departmental tasks and 2% made no response to the question.

Table XVI shows that 61% of department heads were allowed approximately thirty to sixty minutes of released time per day. The seven department heads provided with a whole day of released time per day were five Guidance department heads, one English department head and one Technical-Vocational department head. The following thirteen department heads reported released time of ninety to one hundred and twenty minutes per day:

<u>Subject Area</u>	<u>Number of Department Heads</u>
Business Education	four
English	two
Social Studies	two
Mathematics	one
Science	one
Fine Arts	one
Commercial Foods	one
Technical-Vocational	one

The semester plan of school organization accounted for most of the 16% of department heads provided with released time of sixty to ninety minutes per day. One respondent from a semester school reported, however, that if the enrollment was greater in the second semester than in the first semester, the department head's released time was not granted.



TABLE XVI

DEPARTMENT HEADS' RELEASED TIME FOR DUTIES OF  
THE DEPARTMENT, REPORTED IN MINUTES  
PER DAY BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 181

	Small School		Medium School		Large School		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent <sup>a</sup>
No released time	4	13	6	5	1	2	11	6
Less than 30 minutes	3	10	2	2	0	0	5	3
From 30 to 60 minutes	19	61	75	68	16	40	110	61
From 60 to 90 minutes	3	10	14	13	12	30	29	16
From 90 to 120 minutes	1	3	5	4	7	17	13	7
Whole day	0	0	6	5	1	2	7	4
Not applicable	1	3	2	2	3	7	6	3
TOTAL	31	100	110	99	40	98	181	100

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



About 57% of all department heads in Alberta were not provided with clerical help. When clerical help was provided, it varied from a full-time secretary (4%) to student secretarial assistance (9%). General office clerical help was also available to 25% of all department heads.

About 44% of the department heads indicated that two to four official departmental meetings were held every month. Several respondents suggested that department heads were continually meeting and consulting with members of their department.

Table XVII shows the placement of department heads into the various instructional levels of the high school organization. The table indicates a growing tendency away from the traditional ten month instructional program. Over 39% of the Alberta department heads were employed in senior high schools using a modified school year program.

#### IV. CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF DEPARTMENT HEADS

The respondents were asked to choose the four most important criteria and the four least important criteria for the selection of department heads. The basic list contained twelve criteria which would seem to be appropriate qualities for department heads.

This section of the questionnaire was taken verbatim from an instrument developed by Robert L. Buser which was used in three companion studies on the department head at Indiana University in 1966.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Donald C. Manlove, and Robert L. Buser, "The Department Head: Myths and Reality," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, L:313, (November 1966), pp. 100-101.







TABLE XVII

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS OF HIGH SCHOOLS  
EMPLOYING DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY SCHOOL  
SIZE

N = 181

	Small School		Medium School		Large School		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent <sup>a</sup>
Ten month school year	15	48	86	78	9	22	110	61
Two semester school year	14	45	7	6	25	62	46	25
Experimental split-semester year	0	0	0	0	5	12	5	3
Trimester school year	1	3	5	4	0	0	6	3
Combination of ten month and semester year	1	3	12	11	1	2	14	8
TOTAL	31	99	110	99	40	98	181	100

<sup>a</sup> All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



Many Alberta department heads expressed disapproval with this section of the questionnaire by stating that all twelve criteria were equally important for the selection of a department head. Eleven department heads (6%) made no response to this section of the questionnaire.

Table XVIII indicates the rank order of criteria considered the "Most Important" for the selection of department heads. All respondents ranked leadership ability as the most important quality for department heads. The department heads in the small-sized high schools then ranked superior teaching ability, disposition toward professional growth and knowledge and ability in curriculum development as most important criteria. The department heads in the medium-sized and large-sized high schools were more in agreement in choosing superior teaching ability, mastery of subject matter and administrative ability as most important criteria for the selection of department heads. The department heads of the large-sized high schools also indicated that an important criterion was the willingness to work; this criterion was not ranked as highly by the other department heads. The Spearman rho rank correlations were as follows: small-sized to medium-sized high schools,  $0.724^*$ ; small-sized to large-sized high schools,  $0.656^*$ ; and medium-sized to large-sized high schools,  $0.012$ . (N. S.)

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\*Significant to the 0.05 level.

(N. S.) Not significant.



TABLE XVIII

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE SELECTION OF  
DEPARTMENT HEADS BASED ON "MOST IMPORTANT" CRITERIA,  
REPORTED BY RANK ORDER, FREQUENCY  
AND SCHOOL SIZE

N = 712

	Small School N = 124		Medium School N = 434		Large School N = 154		TOTAL	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Leadership ability	24	1	85	1	34	1	143	1
Superior teaching ability	21	2	53	2.5	17	4	91	2
Mastery of subject matter	10	6	53	2.5	21	2	84	3
Administrative ability	9	8.5	46	4	19	3	74	4
Co-operative spirit	10	6	44	5	10	9	64	5.5
Disposition toward professional growth	16	3	36	6.5	12	6	64	5.5
Willingness to work	9	8.5	36	6.5	15	5	60	7
Understanding of students	10	6	35	8	11	7.5	56	8
Knowledge and ability in curriculum development	11	4	33	9	11	7.5	55	9
Graduate study in the field	3	10	7	10	1	11.5	11	10
Popularity among members of the department	1	11	4	11	2	10	7	11
Seniority in the department	0	12	2	12	1	11.5	3	12

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.







The comparison of ranks between the Indiana Study<sup>2</sup> and this study was as follows:

Most Important Criteria (by rank order)	Alberta Study	Indiana Study
Leadership ability	1	1
Superior teaching ability	2	3
Mastery of subject matter	3	2
Administrative ability	4	5
Cooperative spirit	5.5	7
Disposition toward professional growth	5.5	8
Willingness to work	7	4
Understanding of students	8	9
Knowledge and ability in curriculum development	9	6
Graduate study in the field	10	10
Popularity among members of the department	11	12
Seniority in the department	12	11

The Spearman rho rank correlation between the most important criteria selected by Alberta department heads and the most important criteria selected by department heads in the Indiana study was 0.886\*.

<sup>2</sup>Lewis M. Ciminillo, "The Department Heads' Perception of the Functions and Characteristics of Their Position," (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966), p. 86.

\*Significant at the 0.05 level.



Table XIX shows the criteria considered "Least Important" for the selection of department heads. The respondents of all three sizes of high schools placed seniority in the department as the least important criterion in the selection of Alberta department heads. Other criteria ranked as least important were popularity among members of the department and graduate study in the field. There was not a general agreement in the ranking of the next group of least important criteria for the selection of department heads. The department heads of the small-sized high schools and the medium-sized high schools ranked knowledge and ability in curriculum development as a least important criterion; the department heads of the large-sized high schools ranked this criterion much further down the list in importance. The Spearman rho rank correlations were as follows: small-sized to medium-sized high school,  $0.865^*$ ; small-sized to large-sized high school,  $0.831^*$ ; and medium-sized to large-sized high school,  $0.743^*$ .

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\* Significant to the 0.05 level.



TABLE XIX

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE SELECTION OF  
DEPARTMENT HEADS BASED ON "LEAST IMPORTANT"  
CRITERIA, REPORTED BY RANK ORDER, FREQUENCY  
AND SCHOOL SIZE

N = 658

	Small School N = 110		Medium School N = 411		Large School N = 137		TOTAL
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency Rank
Seniority in the department	30	1	102	1	37	1	169 1
Popularity among members of the department	24	2	80	2	24	3	128 2
Graduate study in the field	17	3	74	3	29	2	120 3
Knowledge and ability in curriculum development	9	4	36	4	6	7	51 4
Administrative ability	7	5.5	26	5	9	4	42 5
Willingness to work	3	9	21	6	5	8.5	29 6
Disposition toward professional growth	5	7	14	8.5	8	5.5	27 7
Mastery of subject matter	7	5.5	14	8.5	4	10	25 8
Superior teaching ability	2	11	20	7	2	11	24 9
Understanding of students	3	9	11	10	8	5.5	22 10
Co-operative spirit	3	9	9	11	5	8.5	17 11
Leadership ability	0	12	4	12	0	12	4 12

NOTE - N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.





The comparison of ranks between the Indiana Study<sup>3</sup> and this study was as follows:

Least Important Criteria (by rank order)	Alberta Study	Indiana Study
Seniority in the department	1	1
Popularity among members of the department	2	2
Graduate study in the field	3	3
Knowledge and ability in curriculum development	4	5
Administrative ability	5	4
Willingness to work	6	8
Disposition toward professional growth	7	9
Mastery of subject matter	8	11
Superior teaching ability	9	7
Understanding of students	10	6
Cooperative spirit	11	10
Leadership ability	12	12

The Spearman rho rank correlation between the least important criteria selected by Alberta department heads and the least important criteria selected by department heads in the Indiana study was 0.861\*.

<sup>3</sup>Ciminillo, op. cit., p. 88.

\*Significant at the 0.05 level.



## V. SUMMARY

A total of thirty-six high schools, each containing a teaching population of twenty-five or more teachers, employed department heads in Alberta. The size of the teaching staff ranged from twenty-five teachers to one hundred and forty teachers. One half of the high schools operated on a traditional ten month organizational plan while the other half operated on several modifications of the instructional year.

Information was received from the usable questionnaires of one hundred and eighty-one department heads, one hundred and thirty-nine of whom were males. The relative newness of the department head position in Alberta was evidenced by the fact that 73% of the respondents had held the position of high school department head for less than four years.

Many department heads questioned if the headship was indeed, an "administrative" position; consequently, it was impossible to obtain an accurate picture of the amount of administrative experience possessed by Alberta department heads.

The average age of Alberta department heads was in the 41 to 50 years category but males were younger, the average age being in the 31 to 40 years category. Professional training was extremely varied with 25% of department heads holding Masters' degrees or better. A wide range of diverse training in special areas was also evidenced. Over 54% of department heads possessed more than twelve years of teaching experience and over 41% had been employed in senior high schools for more than twelve years. Department heads exhibited mobility in their position for only one-fifth of Alberta department heads had remained in



their present high school for over thirteen years.

Over two-thirds of Alberta department heads taught more than half of the school day. Sixteen major subject areas had designated department heads and several combinations of subject areas were reported. Most departments contained five to eight teachers. About 92% of department heads were provided with released time from classroom duties. The amount of released time per day varied from thirty minutes per day to no assigned teaching duties per day. Over half of the department heads were not provided with clerical help. When provision was made for clerical help, the assistance ranged from part-time student secretarial help to full-time secretary and receptionist.

Department heads were asked to select criteria deemed "Most Important" and "Least Important" for high school department heads. The three qualities ranked as most important for Alberta department heads were as follows: (1) Leadership ability; (2) Superior teaching ability; and (3) Mastery of subject matter. The three qualities ranked least important for department heads were: (1) Seniority in the department; (2) Popularity among members of the department; and (3) Graduate study in the field.

A comparison of findings for this section of the questionnaire was made with a similar study in Indiana in 1966. The Spearman rho rank correlation between the most important criteria selected by department heads in Alberta and the most important criteria selected by department heads in Indiana was 0.886 which was significant to the 0.05 level. The Spearman rho rank correlation between the least important criteria selected by Alberta department heads and the least important







criteria selected by department heads in Indiana was 0.861 which was significant to the 0.05 level.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

This chapter describes the "actual" duties and the "suggested" functions of the high school department head in Alberta.

#### I. THE ACTUAL DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

##### Tabulation of the Data

The respondents were asked to list five specific duties or tasks performed in the past school day because of their designated position of high school department head.

The department heads listed copious comments and a total of 905 responses were reported and hand-tabulated. Only nine respondents left this section of the questionnaire unanswered. Several respondents objected to the wording of this section of the questionnaire and pointed out that tasks were never "assigned" to them; the responsibility for the performance of certain tasks rested entirely with each department head.

These 905 responses were assigned to one of the nine major categories, seven categories of which represented the range of duties of department heads as suggested by Garrett's Study in 1963. (See Chapter II, pp. 18-19) In order to accommodate all of the responses, the following two additional categories were added to Garrett's list:

1. Communicating directly with students:
  - (a) By interviews and counselling sessions.
  - (b) By administration of special tests.
  - (c) By consultation with parents, school nurse, school psychologist and specialized support personnel.
  - (d) By coaching or assisting students with special projects.
  - (e) By acting as a staff advisor on student committees.



2. Miscellaneous tasks performed by department heads which could not be assigned to any of the major categories.

Thus, the 905 responses to the actual duties performed by Alberta high school department heads were placed within the following nine major categories:

1. Organization of the department for instruction
2. Staffing of the department
3. Evaluation procedures of the department
4. Communication and coordination of all aspects of the department
5. Provision of supplies, materials and equipment for the department
6. Provision of instructional leadership to all members of the department
7. Supervision of the members of the department
8. Communication with students
9. Miscellaneous tasks

A discussion of the actual duties performed by department heads follows.

#### Actual Duties in Relation to School Size

Table XX shows the rank order of the actual duties performed according to the size of the high school. The area of communication and coordination of the department was ranked first for all respondents (23%); the category of the provision of materials and equipment ranked closely behind (22%). The actual duties of evaluation, staffing, and supervision of the department were ranked seventh, eighth, and ninth, respectively.





TABLE XX

ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY RANK ORDER, BY SCHOOL SIZE  
AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Major Categories of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads	Small-sized School N = 155		Medium-sized School N = 550		Large-sized School N = 200		Total N = 905	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Communication and coordination	36	2	128	1	44	2	208	1
Provision of materials and equipment	39	1	112	2	49	1	200	2
Provision of instructional leadership	27	3	73	3	35	3	135	3
Organization of the depart- ment	14	5	62	4	17	5	93	4.5
Miscellaneous tasks	19	4	52	5	22	4	93	4.5
Communication with students	8	6	41	6.5	12	6	61	6
Evaluation of the department	6	7	41	6.5	7	8	54	7
Staffing of the department	5	8	19	9	9	7	33	8
Supervision of the department	1	9	22	8	5	9	28	9

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total number of respondents.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



The rank order of actual duties was closely related because the respondents ranked actual duties in much the same order--despite the size of the high school. The Spearman rho rank correlations were as follows: small-sized to medium-sized high schools,  $0.946^*$ ; small-sized to large-sized high schools,  $0.984^*$ ; and, medium-sized to large-sized high schools,  $0.905^*$ .

#### Actual Duties in Relation to Subject Area of Responsibility

The actual duties listed by respondents were cross-tabulated with the subject areas of responsibility. (Table XXI)

The department heads in the fields of Languages, Guidance and Student Activities listed tasks in the area of communication and coordination more frequently than did those from other departments. Specific duties in this area included such tasks as preparing notices and information bulletins, acting as the liaison between the administration and the teachers, acquainting teachers with departmental policies and conducting the correspondence of the department.

The department heads in the fields of Technical-Vocational, Commercial Foods, Religion, Business Education and Physical Education reported specific duties related to the provision of materials and equipment more frequently than did those from other departments. In this major category were included such tasks as ordering, maintaining, replacing, repairing and distributing appropriate instructional materials and equipment.

The Social Studies department heads reported, with more

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\*Significant to the 0.05 level.



TABLE IX1  
 ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED  
 REPORTED BY SUBJECT  
 PERCENTAGE OF  
 RESPONSES  
 N = 905

MAJOR CATEGORIES OF ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS	ENGLISH		SOCIAL STUDIES		MATHE- MATICS		SCIENCE		BUSINESS EDUCATION		PHYSICAL EDUCATION		LANGUAGES		GUIDANCE		TECHNICAL- VOCATIONAL ARTS		FINE ARTS		RELIGION		SPECIAL VOCATIONAL		COMM. FOODS		GIRLS' VOCATIONAL		STUDENT AFFAIRS		INDUS. ARTS		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	frequency	per cent <sup>a</sup>		
Communication and coordination Provision of materials and equipment	29	21	36	29	25	22	26	23	19	18	18	26	18	33	16	29	11	22	1	7	0	0	2	13	2	20	2	20	2	40	1	20	208	23
	38	27	26	21	13	11	28	24	30	29	20	29	8	14	1	2	21	42	3	20	5	33	1	7	3	30	1	10	1	20	1	20	200	22
	23	16	27	22	19	17	22	19	14	13	6	9	7	13	6	11	4	8	1	7	2	13	2	13	1	10	1	10	0	0	0	0	135	15
	17	12	5	4	6	5	13	11	13	12	13	10	5	9	8	14	4	8	1	7	3	20	3	20	1	10	0	0	1	20	0	0	93	10
	6	4	8	6	18	16	11	10	6	6	4	5	9	16	4	7	6	12	7	46	2	13	2	13	3	30	5	50	0	0	2	40	93	10
Communication with students	4	3	4	3	13	11	0	0	9	9	3	4	2	4	17	31	2	4	0	0	1	7	4	27	0	0	0	0	1	20	0	0	61	7
Evaluation of the department	8	6	10	8	10	9	6	5	7	6	2	3	5	9	2	4	1	2	0	0	1	7	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20	54	6
Staffing of the department	10	7	5	4	5	4	5	4	2	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	2	13	1	7	0	0	0	0	1	10	0	0	0	0	33	4
Supervision of the department	5	4	4	3	6	5	4	4	5	5	3	4	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	3	
TOTAL	140	100	125	100	115	100	115	100	105	100	70	100	55	100	55	100	50	100	15	100	15	100	15	100	10	100	5	100	5	100	905	100		

Note - N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total number of respondents.

<sup>a</sup> All percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.





frequency, (22%) that their specific duties were conducive to providing instructional leadership to members of the department. Duties in this area included: suggestions for content of new courses, assistance in the use of resource materials, and discussions with members of the department concerning educational innovations.

The department heads in the fields of Physical Education, Religion, and Special Vocational listed specific duties in the area of organization of the department more frequently than other department heads. Examples of these duties were planning class schedules, field trips, grouping of students and determining timetables for classes.

The Mathematics' department heads listed evaluation procedures more frequently than others (9%) but very few responses were indicated in this area by other department heads. Evaluation procedures included such tasks as coordinating the testing program of the department, making periodic evaluation of the instructional methods used by the department and determining standards for examination results.

The department heads of English, Religion and Girls' Vocational listed more frequently the specific tasks related to the staffing of the department. Examples of these duties were the orientation of new teachers, the assignment of teachers to appropriate activities within the department, and assistance to substitute teachers.

The department heads of Mathematics (5%) more frequently listed specific duties of a supervisory nature than the department heads of other subject areas. Specific duties within this area were visitation of classrooms, reviewing of test results with teachers, and discussion



with teachers regarding progress in handling the subject matter.

The department heads designated to the field of Guidance indicated that 31% of their actual duties were concerned with direct communication with students. It is interesting to note, however, that department heads of several subject areas indicated that there were no actual duties concerned with direct communication with students.

Approximately 77% of all duties performed by department heads were associated with the varied aspects of coordination of classroom instruction; about 7% of actual duties were associated with direct dialogue with students. Perhaps the criticism directed by Hammock and Owings<sup>1</sup> that department heads "emphasize teaching processes--rather than developing individuals" may be valid in Alberta.

#### Actual Duties in Relation to the Sex of the Department Head

Table XXII shows the relationship between the sex of the department head and the actual duties performed.

Male department heads listed more duties in the areas of the provision of materials and equipment, the provision of instructional leadership and the supervision of the department.

Female department heads more frequently indicated specific tasks in the areas of communication and coordination, the organization of the department, direct communication with the students, the evaluation of the department and the staffing of the department.

The greatest differences in the percentages occurred in the two following areas: male department heads indicated more duties

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<sup>1</sup>Hammock and Owings, op. cit., p. 82.



TABLE XXII

ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY SEX AND BY TOTAL  
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Major Categories of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads	Male Department Head Frequency Percent	Female Department Head Frequency Percent	Total N = 905 Frequency Percent <sup>a</sup>
Communication and coordina- tion	155 22	53 25	208 23
Provision of materials and equipment	158 23	42 19	200 22
Provision of instructional leadership	109 16	26 12	135 15
Organization of the department	68 10	25 12	93 10
Miscellaneous tasks	74 11	19 9	93 10
Communication with students	41 6	20 9	61 7
Evaluation of the department	41 6	13 6	54 6
Staffing of the department	21 3	12 6	33 4
Supervision of the department	23 3	5 2	28 3
Total	690 100	215 100	905 100

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total number of respondents.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.







associated with provision of instructional leadership than females; female department heads listed more duties associated with direct communication with high school students than males.

#### Actual Duties in Relation to the Age of the Department Head

Table XXIII summarizes the relationship between the age of the department head and the specific duties performed.

The age of the department head seemed to make very little difference in the types of actual duties performed.

Department heads over sixty years of age and with many years of teaching experience indicated more specific duties in the areas of communication with students, evaluation, staffing, and supervision of the department.

On the other hand, the younger department heads indicated more responses in the areas of the provision of materials and equipment and the provision of instructional leadership.

Perhaps the complex procedures of evaluation, staffing, and supervision of members of the department become less difficult as the department head becomes older, more experienced and more confident.

#### Actual Duties in Relation to the Years of Professional Training of the Department Head

The actual duties performed by department heads did not seem to depend on the number of years of professional training acquired by department heads. (Table XXIV)

There was great similarity between duties performed by department heads with less than three years of professional training



TABLE XXIII

ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY AGE AND BY TOTAL  
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Major Categories of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads	21 - 30 years		31 - 40 years		41 - 50 years		51 - 60 years		Over 60 years		Age not reported		Total N = 905	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	% <sup>a</sup>
Communication and coordi- nation	29	22	74	24	47	23	39	21	16	25	3	20	208	23
Provision of materials and equipment	28	22	71	23	52	25	41	22	7	11	1	7	200	22
Provision of instructional leadership	17	13	49	16	24	12	33	18	10	15	2	13	135	15
Organization of the depart- ment	15	12	32	10	22	11	15	8	8	12	1	7	93	10
Miscellaneous tasks	20	15	33	11	18	9	19	10	1	1	2	13	93	10
Communication with students	7	5	16	5	14	7	13	7	9	14	2	13	61	7
Evaluation of the department	4	3	14	5	15	7	12	7	6	9	3	20	54	6
Staffing of the department	8	6	5	2	8	4	7	4	5	8	0	0	33	4
Supervision of the department	2	2	11	4	5	2	6	3	3	5	1	7	28	3
Total	130	100	305	100	205	100	185	100	65	100	15	100	905	100

NOTE - N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total number of respondents.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



TABLE XXIV

ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING  
AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Major Categories of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads	Three years or less		Four years		Five years		Six years or more		Total N = 905	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Frequency	Percent
Communication and coordination	65	21	60	23	25	26	58	24	208	23
Provision of materials and equipment	71	23	57	22	18	19	54	23	200	22
Provision of instruction leadership	49	16	34	13	11	12	41	17	135	15
Organization of the department	30	10	29	11	12	13	22	9	93	10
Miscellaneous tasks	30	10	29	11	8	8	26	11	93	10
Communication with students	29	9	14	5	8	8	10	4	61	7
Evaluation of the department	16	5	18	7	6	6	14	6	54	6
Staffing of the department	9	3	12	5	5	5	7	3	33	4
Supervision of the department	11	3	7	3	2	2	8	3	28	3
Total	310	100	260	100	95	99	240	100	905	100

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total number of respondents.





and duties performed by department heads possessing six or more years of professional training.

Actual Duties in Relation to the Number of Teachers in the Department

Table XXV shows the relationship between the number of teachers in the department and the actual duties performed.

As the size of the department increased, the number of specific tasks concerned with communication and coordination seemed to decrease; however, heads of departments of larger size did indicate an increased number of duties related to the obtaining materials, equipment, and supplies. Department heads with departments of over sixteen teachers further indicated many more specific duties associated with staffing the department but fewer specific duties associated with the supervision of the department.

The heads of departments of smaller size reported numerous duties associated with direct student communication, and also with organization of time tables and schedules of the department.

Department heads with departments of nine to twelve teachers were able to provide more suggestions for resource materials, more assistance for new high school courses, and more instructional leadership to members of the department.

Actual Duties in Relation to the Amount of Released Time Per Day

Table XXVI indicates the relationship between the amount of released time per day and the actual duties performed.

With more released time, the department heads reported many more specific duties associated with direct communication with



TABLE XXV

ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN THE  
DEPARTMENT AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE  
OF RESPONSE

Major Categories of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads	1 to 4		5 to 8		9 to 12		13 to 16		Over 16		Total N = 905	Percent <sup>a</sup>
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	Frequency	
Communication and coordi- nation	30	21	74	26	64	24	26	19	14	19	208	23
Provision of materials and equipment	26	18	61	21	56	21	39	29	18	24	200	22
Provision of instructional leadership	15	11	38	13	51	19	23	17	8	11	135	15
Organization of the depart- ment	22	16	27	9	21	8	12	9	11	15	93	10
Miscellaneous tasks	25	18	32	11	18	7	12	9	6	8	93	10
Communication with students	12	9	23	8	15	6	6	4	5	7	61	7
Evaluation of the department	4	3	21	7	20	8	7	5	2	2	54	6
Staffing of the department	2	1	9	3	9	3	4	3	9	12	33	4
Supervision of the department	4	3	5	2	11	4	6	4	2	2	28	3
Total	140	100	290	100	265	100	135	100	75	100	905	100

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total number of respondents.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.





TABLE XXVI

ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY AMOUNT OF RELEASED TIME PER  
DAY AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Major Categories of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads	No released time		Less than 30 minutes per day		From 30 - 60 minutes per day		From 60 - 90 minutes per day		From 90 - 120 minutes per day		No assigned teaching duties		No response to amount of released time		Total  N = 905	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Communication and coordination	13	23	6	24	122	22	40	28	13	20	4	11	10	33	208	23
Provision of materials and equipment	12	22	6	24	117	21	37	26	21	32	4	11	3	10	200	22
Provision of instruc- tional leadership	11	20	8	32	79	14	21	15	12	18	4	11	0	0	135	15
Organization of the department	2	4	2	8	58	11	12	8	6	9	5	14	8	27	93	10
Miscellaneous tasks	3	5	0	0	78	14	5	3	3	5	3	9	1	3	93	10
Communication with students	6	11	2	8	26	5	7	5	3	5	12	34	5	17	61	7
Evaluation of the department	5	9	1	4	35	6	8	5	2	3	1	3	2	7	54	6
Staffing of the department	1	2	0	0	19	3	9	6	2	3	1	3	1	3	33	4
Supervision of the department	2	4	0	0	16	3	6	4	3	5	1	3	0	0	28	3
Total	55	100	25	100	550	99	145	100	65	100	35	99	30	100	905	100

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses and not necessarily to the total number of respondents.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest number.





students and the provision of time for ordering materials and replacing equipment. Department heads with large amounts of released time also reported they had more time to plan class schedules, to organized field trips and to determine teaching time tables.

It is interesting to note, however, that department heads with little or no released time were able to provide more instructional assistance to teachers of the department than department heads with great amounts of released time. Heads with less than thirty minutes of released time per day were also able to complete more specific duties associated with evaluation and supervision of members of the department.

#### Actual Duties in Relation to the Instructional Program

Table XXVII summarizes the actual duties of the department heads in relation to the instructional program of the high school.

Department heads in schools operated on a trimester system listed many more specific duties related to the ordering of materials and equipment.

Department heads from high schools which operated on a combination of ten month and two semester systems reported numerous specific tasks associated with the coordination of instruction, organization of teaching assignments, and evaluation of the department.

The instructional leadership provided by department heads did not vary greatly from one instructional program to another.

#### Range of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads

The 905 responses listed by the department heads indicated



TABLE XXVII

ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS,  
REPORTED BY INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM OF HIGH  
SCHOOL AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Major Categories of Actual Duties Performed by Department Heads	Ten month instruc- tional year		Two semester instruc- tional year		Experimental split- semester instructional year		Ten month and semester instruc- tional year		Tri- mester instruc- tional year		Total N = 905	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Communication and coordination	126	22	51	22	6	24	21	30	4	13	208	23
Provision of materials and equipment	128	23	46	20	6	24	9	13	11	37	200	22
Provision of instruc- tional leadership	77	14	40	17	3	12	10	14	5	17	135	15
Organization of the department	54	10	23	10	1	4	11	16	4	13	93	10
Miscellaneous tasks	56	10	28	12	7	28	2	3	0	0	93	10
Communication with students	39	7	14	6	0	0	5	7	3	10	61	7
Evaluation of the department	34	6	8	4	1	4	10	14	1	3	54	6
Staffing of the department	15	3	13	6	1	4	2	3	2	7	33	4
Supervision of the department	21	4	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	3
Total	550	100	230	100	25	100	70	100	30	100	905	100
												100



the wide range and diversity of tasks performed by high school department heads in Alberta. Some of the more unusual tasks were difficult to force into any one of the major categories and were designated as "Miscellaneous Tasks." The following list of some of these specific duties reported by department heads describes the variety and complexity of subject specialties and disciplines for which Alberta department heads were responsible:

1. Repaired business machines and typewriters.
2. Coordinated excursion of classes to see University drama production.
3. Distributed slide rules to students.
4. Coached the school debating team.
5. Distributed materials relating to student exchanges to Quebec.
6. Transferred a canoe to the school.
7. Searched for lost audio-visual equipment.
8. Clarified drawings from the welding department for a project requested by another school.
9. Checked with caretaker on physical arrangements for a fund-raising campaign meeting.
10. Prepared a bulletin board for motivational purposes.
11. Worked on library collection of reading materials for teachers of the department.
12. Discussed evaluation of student teachers.
13. Paid laboratory assistants.
14. Collected ticket money for a student field trip to a local movie.
15. Arranged for replacement tubes for a tape recorder.
16. Phoned a radio station to arrange for loan of tapes.







17. Promoted teacher-student curling game.
18. Met with students to register for a scholarship exam.
19. Arranged for a department assignment for home study for an absent student.
20. Ordered necessary supplies for two cafeterias.
21. Arranged for payment of wrestling entry fee.
22. Introduced visiting Drama Group.
23. Observed a play prepared by a class of students.
24. Attended a city-wide department head meeting.
25. Delivered exam answer sheets to School Board Office for machine marking.
26. Arranged bus transportation for swimming classes.
27. Attempted to solve personality clashes on student-run activity.
28. Set "semester end-points" for Grade Ten courses.
29. Administered the writing of a scholarship exam.
30. Acquired names of potential candidates for an experimental work project in cooperation with industry.
31. Entered departmental stores in library.
32. Spoke at "Career Day" at two junior high schools.
33. Typed minutes of a meeting.
34. Phoned University regarding Computer Day for students.
35. Checked receipts from cafeteria cash registers.

## II. THE SUGGESTED FUNCTIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD

This section of the department head questionnaire was an adaptation of the Robert L. Buser instrument used in a research study in.



1966<sup>2</sup>.

The respondents were given a list of twenty-five suggested functions of the department head position and were asked to make one selection for each suggested function from one of the following four choices:

Choice One - The suggested functions "WERE" designated to department heads and "SHOULD BE" their responsibility.

Choice Two - The suggested functions "WERE NOT" designated to department heads and "SHOULD NOT BE" their responsibility.

Choice Three - The suggested functions "WERE" designated to department heads but "SHOULD NOT BE" their responsibility.

Choice Four - The suggested functions "WERE NOT" designated to department heads but "SHOULD BE" their responsibility.

A discussion of the choices selected by the department heads follows.

### Range of Choices

Table XXVIII summarizes the percentage of response for choices of suggested functions. Over 63% of respondents indicated that the majority of the twenty-five functions should be their responsibility. Only 16% of the department heads indicated that conflict was apparent in the assignment of some of the tasks. A very small number of respondents (2%) made no response to the suggested functions which perhaps indicated that the function was not applicable to certain subject areas.

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<sup>2</sup>Robert L. Buser, "The Functions and Characteristics of Department Heads as Perceived by High School Principals." (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington, 1966), p. 128.



TABLE XXVIII

DEPARTMENT HEADS' CHOICES OF SUGGESTED  
FUNCTIONS, REPORTED BY FREQUENCY AND  
PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Suggested Functions	Frequency	Per cent <sup>a</sup>
Choice 1 - "Were and Should Be"	2831	63
Choice 2 - "Were Not and Should Not Be"	884	19
Choice 3 - "Were But Should Not Be"	142	3
Choice 4 - "Were Not But Should Be"	580	13
Choice 5 - No response	88	2
Total	4525	100

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.





Table XXIX shows a detailed representation of the frequency of choice for the entire twenty-five suggestions functions.

The orientation of new teachers into the department was the function considered to be the chief responsibility of the department head; whereas, the acting of a substitute teacher was not considered to be a prime responsibility of the department head.

Several of the following functions indicated a definite lack of consensus of opinion among the respondents:

1. To supervise the teachers of the department;
2. To provide administrators with an appraisal of class-room performance of teachers;
3. To serve as a part of principal's administrative staff;
4. To conduct demonstration lessons.



TABLE XXIX

DEPARTMENT HEADS' SELECTION OF SUGGESTED  
FUNCTIONS, REPORTED BY CHOICE, AND  
TOTAL FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE

N = 181

Department Head Functions	"Were and should be"	Choices			Total
		"Were but should not be"	"Were not but should be"	"Were not and should not be"	
1. To orient new teachers into the department	177	0	4	0	181
2. To requisition department supplies and equipment	172	5	2	2	181
3. To preside at subject area department meetings	171	2	2	6	181
4. To provide leadership in planning the department testing program	166	1	6	4	181
5. To prepare department notices and bulletins	165	3	4	7	181
6. To work with teachers in improving and coordinating their procedures for student evaluation	164	0	9	3	181
7. To provide leadership in the selection of all instructional materials	143	2	8	23	181
8. To assist members of the department in the interpretation of examination results	136	1	20	21	181



TABLE XXIX (Continued)

Department Head Functions	Choices				Response Total
	"Were and should be"	"Were but should not be"	"Were not but should be"	"Were not and should not be"	
9. To distribute department notices and bulletins	129	25	3	24	181
10. To conduct research and experimentation within the department	124	3	36	15	181
11. To provide leadership in the development of the curriculum for the total school program	121	2	26	29	181
12. To work with teachers of the department who are experiencing problems with student behavior	120	5	24	28	181
13. To familiarize all members of the department with community resources and facilities	116	3	26	29	181
14. To administer department funds	114	1	29	30	181
15. To maintain a professional library for members of the department	114	6	27	34	181
16. To demonstrate the use of newly acquired or newly developed equipment	107	3	16	50	181
17. To supervise the teachers of the department through classroom visitations and observations	91	10	25	46	181





TABLE XXIX (Continued)

Department Head Functions	Choices				Response Total
	"Were and should be"	"Were but should not be"	"Were not but should be"	"Were not and should not be"	
18. To draw up the department teaching assignments for the school master time table	88	3	59	27	181
19. To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff	81	9	41	49	181
20. To develop and implement in-service training programs for all members of the department	77	0	53	48	181
21. To provide administrators with an appraisal of the classroom performance of teachers of the department	74	5	23	74	181
22. To conduct demonstration lessons for the teachers of the department	61	1	43	70	181
23. To work directly with students having academic or personal problems	59	6	30	83	181
24. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table	36	6	58	76	181
25. To act as a substitute teacher when members of the department are absent	25	40	6	106	181



Choice One - Suggested Functions--"WERE" and "SHOULD BE"

Table XXX shows the rank order of suggested functions which "were" assigned to department heads and which "should be" their responsibility.

The following six functions were listed by 91% or more of all the department heads who felt these tasks should be assigned to them:

1. To orient new teachers into the department.
2. To requisition department supplies and equipment.
3. To preside at subject area department meetings.
4. To provide leadership in planning the department testing program.
5. To prepare department notices and bulletins.
6. To work with teachers in improving and coordinating their procedures for student evaluation.

These six functions were ranked in a similar manner by department heads in the small-sized, medium-sized and large-sized high schools.

At least another ten functions were deemed to be the responsibility of the department head by over half of the respondents.

Only nine of the suggested functions were chosen by less than half of the department heads.



TABLE XXX

DEPARTMENT HEADS' RESPONSES TO FUNCTIONS THAT THEY  
STATED "WERE" AND "SHOULD BE" ASSIGNED TO THEM,  
REPORTED BY RANK ORDER, BY SCHOOL SIZE AND  
BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE RESPONSES

Department Head Functions: Choice One "Were" and "Should Be"	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank Percent <sup>a</sup>
To orient new teachers	29	3	108	1	40	1	177	1 98
To requisition department supplies	30	1	104	2	38	4	172	2 95
To preside at subject department meetings	29	3	103	3	39	2	171	3 95
To provide leadership in planning the department testing program	28	5	101	4	37	6	166	4 92
To prepare department notices and bulletins	29	3	98	6	38	4	165	5 92
To work with teachers in improving their procedures for student evaluation	27	6	99	5	38	4	164	6 91
To provide leadership in the selection of all instructional materials	26	7	83	8	34	8	143	7 79

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses.





TABLE XXX (Continued)

Department Head Functions: Choice One "Were" and "Should Be"	Small School Frequency Rank	Medium School Frequency Rank	Large School Frequency Rank	Total Frequency Rank	Percent				
To assist members of the department in the inter- pretation of examina- tion results	19	12.5	87	7	30	13	136	8	75
To distribute department notices and bulletins	21	10	75	9	33	9.5	129	9	71
To conduct research and experimentation	19	12.5	72	11	33	9.5	124	10	69
To provide leadership in the development of the curricu- lum	20	11	70	12	21	11.5	121	11	67
To work with teachers of the department who are experi- encing problems with student behavior	16	16	73	10	31	11.5	120	12	66
To familiarize all members of the department with community resources	24	8.5	64	14.5	28	14.5	116	13	64
To administer department funds	18	14.5	60	16	36	7	114	14.5	63
To maintain a professional library	24	8.5	65	13	25	17.5	114	14.5	63
To demonstrate the use of newly acquired or newly developed equipment	18	14.5	64	14.5	25	17.5	107	16	59



TABLE XXX (Continued)

Department Head Functions: Choice One "Were" and "Should Be"	Small School Frequency	Small School Rank	Medium School Frequency	Medium School Rank	Large School Frequency	Large School Rank	Total Frequency	Total Rank	Percent <sup>a</sup>
To supervise the teachers of the department	8	21	57	17	26	16	91	17	50
To draw up the department teaching assignment	4	23.5	56	18	28	14.5	88	18	49
To serve as a part of the prin- cipal's administrative staff	13	19	48	19	20	20	81	19	45
To develop and implement in- service training programs	15	17.5	45	20	17	22	77	20	42
To provide administrators with an appraisal of the class- room performance of teachers	15	17.5	38	21	21	19	74	21	41
To conduct demonstration lessons	6	22	37	22.5	18	21	61	22	34
To work directly with students	11	20	37	22.5	11	23.5	59	23	33
To group students for place- ment in classes	4	23.5	23	24	9	25	36	24	20
To act as a substitute teacher	3	25	11	25	11	23.5	25	25	14

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses.



Choice Two - Suggested Functions - "WERE NOT" and "SHOULD NOT BE"

The department heads were not in general agreement when choosing suggested functions which "were not" designated to them and "should not be" their responsibility. (Table XXXI)

However, less than 59% of department heads indicated dissatisfaction with assignment of functions. These six functions were listed with more frequency as tasks which should not be assigned to department heads:

1. To act as a substitute teacher when members of the department are absent.
2. To work directly with students having academic or personal problems.
3. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table.
4. To provide administrators with an appraisal of the classroom performance of teachers of the department.
5. To conduct demonstration lessons for the teachers of the department.
6. To demonstrate the use of newly acquired or newly developed equipment.

These functions which were not satisfactory to the department heads generally impinged upon duties of other school personnel such as the assistant principal, the audio-visual specialist, the guidance counsellor and the high school principal.

The department head of the small-sized high school ranked the supervision of teachers of the department high on the list of tasks which should not be assigned to department heads; whereas, the department head of the large-sized high school ranked serving on the principal's administrative staff as a function which should not be assigned to the department head.







TABLE XXXI

DEPARTMENT HEADS' RESPONSES TO FUNCTIONS THAT THEY STATED "WERE NOT" AND "SHOULD NOT BE" ASSIGNED TO THEM, REPORTED BY RANK ORDER, BY SCHOOL SIZE AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Department Head Functions: Choice Two "Were Not" and "Should Not Be"	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total	Per- cent <sup>a</sup>	
	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency	Rank	cent
To act as a substitute teacher	23	1	70	1	13	5.5	106	1	59
To work directly with students having academic or personal problems	10	4.5	52	2	21	1	83	2	46
To group students for placement in classes	8	7	48	4	20	2	76	3	42
To provide administrators with an appraisal of the classroom performance of the teachers of the department	10	4.5	50	3	14	4	74	4	41
To conduct demonstration lessons	14	2.5	43	5	13	5.5	70	5	39
To demonstrate the use of newly acquired or newly developed equipment	8	7	33	6	9	8	50	6	28
To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff	8	7	26	9	15	3	49	7	27

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses.



TABLE XXXI (Continued)

Department Head Functions: Choice Two "Were Not" and "Should Not Be"	Small School Frequency Rank	Medium School Frequency Rank	Large School Frequency Rank	Total Frequency Rank	Per- cent <sup>a</sup>				
To develop and implement in-service training pro- grams	5	9.5	31	7	12	48	8	27	
To supervise the teachers of the department	14	2.5	25	10	7	11	46	9	25
To maintain a professional library	4	11.5	22	11	8	9.5	34	10	19
To administer department funds	1	18.5	27	8	2	18	30	11	17
To familiarize all members of the department with com- munity resources	3	14	20	13	6	12.5	29	12.5	16
To provide leadership in the development of the curriculum	3	14	20	13	6	12.5	29	12.5	16
To work with teachers of the department who are experi- encing problems with student behavior	5	9.5	19	15.5	4	15.5	28	14	16
To distribute department notices	1	18.5	19	15.5	4	15.5	24	16	13
To draw up the department teaching assignments	3	14	20	13	4	15.5	27	15	15

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses.



TABLE XXXI (Continued)

Department Head Functions: Choice Two "Were Not" and "Should Not Be"	Small School	Medium School	Large School	Total	Per- cent				
Frequency Rank	Frequency Rank	Frequency Rank	Frequency Rank	Frequency Rank	cent				
To provide leadership in the selection of all instructional materials	2	16	17	4	15.5	23	17	13	
To assist members of the department in the interpretation of examination results	4	11.5	9	19	8	9.5	21	18	12
To conduct research and experimentation	1	18.5	10	18	0	23.5	15	19	8
To prepare department notices and bulletins	0	23	6	20	1	20	7	20	4
To preside at subject area department meetings	1	18.5	5	21	0	23.5	6	21	3
To work with teachers in improving their procedures for student evaluation	0	23	2	23	1	20	3	23	2
To provide leadership in planning the department testing program	0	23	4	22	0	23.5	4	22	2
To requisition department supplies	0	23	1	24	1	20	2	24	1
To orient new teachers into the department	0	23	0	25	0	23.5	0	25	0





Choice Three - Suggested Functions--"WERE" but "SHOULD NOT BE"

Table XXXII indicates some of the possible conflicts inherent in the department head position in Alberta.

Over 22% of the department heads reported that acting as a substitute teacher was a present duty which should not be a function of the department head. This function was ranked first by medium-sized and large-sized high schools and was ranked second by small-sized high schools.

Over 14% of the respondents felt that the distribution of department notices and bulletins was a function which could best be completed by personnel other than department heads.

The following functions indicated additional conflict of department heads:

1. To supervise the teachers of the department through classroom visitations and observations.
2. To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff.
3. To work directly with students having academic or personal problems.
4. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table.

The department head of the large-sized high school did not see any conflict of task concerning the supervision of the teachers of the department.

Finally, the respondents indicated slight dissatisfaction with only ten out of the twenty-five functions listed in this section of the questionnaire.



TABLE XXXII

DEPARTMENT HEADS' RESPONSES TO FUNCTIONS THAT THEY STATED "WERE" BUT "SHOULD NOT BE" ASSIGNED TO THEM, REPORTED BY RANK ORDER, BY SCHOOL SIZE AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Department Head Functions: Choice Three "Were" but "Should Not Be"	Small School	Medium School	Large School	Total	Per- cent <sup>a</sup>
To act as a substitute teacher when members of the department are absent	3	2	14	40	1 22
To distribute department notices and bulletins	6	1	3	25	2 14
To supervise the teachers of the department through classroom visitations and observations	0	7	1	10	3 6
To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff	0	7	2	9	4 5
To work directly with students having academic or personal problems	1	3	3	6	6 3

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses.



TABLE XXXII (Continued)

Department Head Functions: Choice Three "Were" but "Should Not Be"	Small School Frequency Rank	Medium School Frequency Rank	Large School Frequency Rank	Total Frequency Rank	Per- cent <sup>a</sup>		
To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table	0	7	4	6.5	2	6	3
To maintain a professional library for members of the department	0	7	4	6.5	2	6	3
To requisition department supplies and equipment	0	7	5	5	0	10	3
To provide administrators with an appraisal of the classroom performance of teachers of the department	0	7	3	8.5	2	6	3
To work with teachers of the department who are experiencing problems with student behavior	0	7	3	8.5	2	6	3

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses.





Choice Four - Suggested Functions - -"WERE NOT" but "SHOULD BE"

The department heads indicated that there were some functions presently not assigned to them but which should be their responsibility.

(Table XXXIII)

The six functions which should be the responsibility of the department head follows:

1. To draw up the department teaching assignments for the school master time table.
2. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table.
3. To develop and implement in-service training programs for all members of the department.
4. To conduct demonstration lessons for the teachers of the department.
5. To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff.
6. To conduct research and experimentation within the department.

The department head in the small-sized high school indicated that the function of the administration of department funds would be assigned to the department; this function was not deemed necessary to the department heads in medium-sized and large-sized high schools.

The department head of the large-sized high school felt that the supervision of the teachers of the department should be a task for their consideration.



TABLE XXXIII

DEPARTMENT HEADS' RESPONSES TO FUNCTIONS THAT THEY STATED "WERE NOT" BUT "SHOULD BE" ASSIGNED TO THEM, REPORTED BY RANK ORDER, BY SCHOOL SIZE AND BY TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE

Department Head Functions: Choice Four "Were Not" but "Should Be"	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total		Percent <sup>a</sup>
	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	
To draw up the department teaching assignments	23	1	32	3	4	7	59	1	33
To group students for placement in classes	17	2	33	1.5	8	2	58	2	32
To develop and implement in-service training	11	4.5	33	1.5	9	1	53	3	30
To conduct demonstration lessons	11	4.5	25	5	7	3	43	4	24
To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff	10	7	28	4	3	10.5	41	5	23
To conduct research and experimentation	10	7	23	6	3	10.5	36	6	20
To work directly with students having academic or personal problems	9	9.5	17	8.5	4	7	30	7	17
To administer department funds	12	3	15	11.5	2	13.5	29	8	16

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses.



TABLE XXXIII (Continued)

Department Head Functions: Choice Four "Were Not" but "Should Be"	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total		Percent <sup>a</sup>
	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	
To maintain a professional library	3	15	19	7	5	4.5	27	9	15
To familiarize all members of the department with community resources	4	14	17	8.5	5	4.5	26	10.5	14
To provide leadership in the development of the curriculum	7	12	16	10	3	10.5	26	10.5	14
To supervise the teachers of the department through classroom visitation	9	9.5	12	13	4	7	25	12	14
To work with teachers of the department who are experiencing problems with student behavior	10	7	11	14.5	3	10.5	24	13	13
To provide administrators with an appraisal of the classroom performance of teachers of the department	6	13	15	11.5	2	13.5	23	14	13
To assist members of the department in the interpretation of examination results	8	11	11	14.5	1	15	20	15	11

<sup>a</sup>Percentage of total responses





### Assignment of Department Head Functions

From the discussion of the four choices of suggested functions selected by department heads, certain functions seemed to be properly and improperly assigned.

Table XXXIV attempts to summarize the most recurring responses made by department heads regarding suggested functions.

The "Were and Should Be" functions were considered to be properly assigned functions; the "Were but Should Not Be" and the "Were Not but Should Be" functions were considered to be improperly assigned functions.

The properly assigned functions were chiefly directed toward providing leadership and coordination of the department. Some clerical tasks were also considered to be part of the department heads' responsibility.

The improperly assigned functions included several functions which could be the responsibility of other staff members. Many of the improperly assigned functions also included administrative tasks, which many department heads felt, were not their proper responsibility.

### III. SUMMARY

The actual duties performed by high school department heads were classified into nine major categories. Despite differences in the size of high school, the department heads recorded the following duties with the most frequency: 1) Communication and coordination of all aspects of the department; (2) Provision of supplies, materials and equipment; and (3) Provision of instructional leadership to all



TABLE XXXIV

ASSIGNMENT OF DEPARTMENT HEAD FUNCTIONS,  
REPORTED BY SUMMARY OF  
TABLES XXX TO XXXIII

Properly Assigned Functions	Improperly Assigned Functions
To orient new teachers	To act as a substitute teacher
To requisition supplies	To distribute department notices
To preside at department meetings	To work directly with students having academic or personal problems
To plan department testing program	To supervise the members of the department
To improve techniques of student evaluation	To provide administration with an appraisal of of teacher performance
To select instructional materials	To serve as a part of the administrative staff
To interpret examination results	To group students for placement in classes
To conduct research and experimentation	To draw up teaching assignments
To provide leadership in the development of curriculum	To conduct demonstration lessons
To work with teachers who are experiencing problems with students	To demonstrate new equipment
	To develop in-service training



members of the department. The actual duties relating to "Supervision of all members of the department," were ranked ninth among the nine categories.

The actual duties performed by department heads were also analyzed in relation to the subject area of responsibility, to the sex of the department head, to the age of the department head, to the number of teachers within the department, to the amount of released time per day, and to the type of instructional program offered by the high school.

The department heads also listed a wide range of duties which could not be placed into any of the main categories, and were thus labelled "Miscellaneous tasks."

The department heads were given an opportunity to select functions which might be "suggested" duties for a department head. Over 91% of the department heads listed the following suggested functions which "were" assigned to department heads and which "should be" their responsibility:

1. To orient new teachers into the department;
2. To requisition department supplies and equipment;
3. To preside at subject area department meetings;
4. To provide leadership in planning the department testing program;
5. To prepare department notices and bulletins; and
6. To work with teachers in improving and coordinating their procedures for student evaluation.

The following suggested functions which "were not" assigned to department heads and which "should not be" their responsibility were listed by less than 50% of the department heads:

1. To act as a substitute teacher when members of the department are absent;
2. To work directly with students having academic or personal problems;







3. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table;
4. To provide administrators with an appraisal of the classroom performance of teachers of the department;
5. To conduct demonstration lessons for the teachers of the department; and
6. To demonstrate the use of newly acquired or newly developed equipment.

Less than 20% of the department heads indicated possible conflicts in their duties when they named six functions which "were" assigned to them but "should not be" their responsibility. These functions were:

1. To act as a substitute teacher when members of the department are absent;
2. To distribute department notices and bulletins;
3. To supervise the teachers of the department through classroom visitations and observations;
4. To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff;
5. To work directly with students having academic or personal problems; and
6. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table.

Approximately 30% of the department heads also indicated that there were many functions which "were not" presently assigned to them but which "should be" their responsibility. The six most often named functions were:

1. To draw up the department teaching assignments for the school master time table;
2. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table;
3. To develop and implement in-service training programs for all members of the department;
4. To conduct demonstration lessons for the teachers of the department;
5. To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff; and
6. To conduct research and experimentation within the department.

Thus, this chapter indicated the wide range of actual duties and suggested functions of the department head.



## CHAPTER VII

### ANALYSIS OF OPEN-END QUESTIONS

The department heads were given an opportunity to express their opinions about the major strengths of the department headship, the major problems encountered in the development of the potential of the department head position and the possible improvements which could be made in the department head system. This chapter summarizes the most frequently recurring opinions expressed by the department heads.

#### I. MAJOR STRENGTHS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEADSHIP

The opinions regarding the major strengths of the department head position were freely expressed and a total of 493 responses were recorded. Sixteen department heads made no response to this question. The 493 responses were placed within the nine categories. Table XXXV indicates, by school size, the frequency and per cent of the responses describing the major strengths of the department head position.

The highest frequency of response, for all three sizes of high schools, revealed that the most important strength of the department headship was in the ability to coordinate all the courses and levels of instruction within the department. The opinions indicated that the department head could organize the work of the department to avoid duplication of effort, to develop a spirit of team work, to act as a spokesman for departmental business, and to provide a



TABLE XXXV

DEPARTMENT HEADS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE  
STRENGTHS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD POSITION  
IN THEIR SCHOOLS, REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 493

Strengths of Department Head Position	Small School Frequency	%	Medium School Frequency	%	Large School Frequency	%	Total Frequency	% <sup>a</sup>
Coordinates all the work of the department	23	29	75	25	32	28	130	26
Acts as an effective liaison between the administration and the members of the department	8	10	41	14	10	9	59	12
Offers in-service education to the new teachers of the department	6	8	19	6	3	2	28	6
Keeps all teachers abreast of educational developments aimed toward the improvement of classroom instruction	18	23	61	20	19	17	98	20
Provides leadership in the development of curriculum, educational goals and objectives	5	6	37	12	21	18	63	13

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.







TABLE XXXV (Continued)

Strengths of Department Head Position	Small School Frequency	Small School % Frequency	Medium School Frequency	Medium School % Frequency	Large School Frequency	Large School % Frequency	Total Frequency	Total % <sup>a</sup>
Possesses an understanding and empathy for the problems of the classroom teacher	4	5	19	6	11	10	34	7
Possesses the ability to evaluate student progress by an awareness of testing programs and evaluation techniques	3	4	12	4	1	1	16	3
Gains extra remuneration and released time from the classroom to perform his duties	2	2	6	2	0	0	8	2
Miscellaneous strengths of the depart- ment head position	10	13	30	10	17	15	57	11
Total	79	100	300	99	114	100	493	100

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



clearing house for the exchange of ideas.

Department heads also suggested that they had the opportunity to keep teachers abreast of innovations and new instructional materials; they could also provide leadership in shaping the curriculum and determining the goals and objectives of the department.

Another frequently mentioned strength of the department head position was his ability to act in a liaison capacity between the administration and the members of the department.

Department heads frequently indicated that because they were, first and foremost, classroom teachers, they were able to understand and to empathize with the problems encountered by other members of their department.

Although the superintendents reported (Chapter IV) that in-service to new teachers was the most important strength of the department head position, the importance ascribed to this response by the department heads themselves was minimal. (6%)

Department heads revealed that they could offer advice in the evaluation of student progress and in the interpretation of examination results.

In addition, department heads indicated that the released time from classroom activities enabled them to expedite their jobs more efficiently.

A great many responses concerning the strengths of the department head position could not be forced into one of the major categories. One respondent stated that a department head added prestige to a subject area; another respondent revealed that the



department head position guaranteed a degree of power and personal satisfaction. Another strength of the department head was his ability to analyze his personnel and put them to work together in ways benefiting all the individuals in the department.

The department heads of the small-sized high schools expressed different views about the strengths of the position. Table XXXVI represents the frequency and the rank order of the major strengths of the department head position. The Spearman rho rank correlation for the three sizes of high schools were as follows: small-sized to medium-sized school, 0.005, (N. S.); small-sized to large-sized school, 0.75\*; and medium sized to large-sized school, 0.855\*.

## II. PROBLEMS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEADSHIP

A total of 340 responses recorded the major problems encountered by the department heads. Eleven respondents, or 6% of the total number of respondents, expressed no opinion on this question.

Table XXXVII summarizes the frequency and per cent, by school size, of the major problems encountered by high school department heads in Alberta.

About 19% of the total responses indicated a lack of time to complete all the necessary tasks. Department heads in medium-sized and large-sized schools found this lack of time as their most pressing problem.

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N. S. - Not significant.

\* Significant at the 0.05 level.







TABLE XXXVI

DEPARTMENT HEADS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE STRENGTHS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD POSITION, REPORTED BY FREQUENCY, BY RANK ORDER, AND BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 493

Strengths of Department Head Position	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total
	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	
Coordinates all the work of the department	23	1	75	1	32	1	130
Keeps all teachers abreast of educational development aimed toward the improvement of classroom instruction	18	2	61	2	19	3	98
Provides leadership in the development of curriculum, educational goals and objectives	5	6	37	4	21	2	63
Acts as an effective liaison agent between the administration and the members of the department	8	4	41	3	10	6	59
Miscellaneous strengths of the department head position	10	3	30	5	17	4	57

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.



TABLE XXXVI (Continued)

Strengths of Department Head Position	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total	
	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	Frequency	Rank
Possesses an understanding and an empathy for the problems of the classroom teacher	4	7	19	6.5	11	5	34	6
Offers in-service education to the new teachers of the department	6	5	19	6.5	3	7	28	7
Possesses the ability to evaluate student progress by an awareness of testing programs and evaluation techniques	3	8	12	8	1	8	16	8
Gains extra remuneration and released time from the classroom to perform duties	2	9	6	9	0	9	8	9

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.



TABLE XXXVII

DEPARTMENT HEADS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE  
PROBLEMS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD POSITION  
IN THEIR SCHOOLS, REPORTED BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 340

Problems of Department Head Position	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total Frequency	% <sup>a</sup>
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Lack of time for all the necessary tasks to be performed by the department head	7	12	41	20	17	22	65	19
Lack of a clearly defined role of authority and responsibility for the department head	5	9	26	12	11	15	42	12
Lack of clerical help, office facilities, department funds, laboratory assistants and teacher aides	5	9	26	12	9	12	40	12
Lack of communication and coordination of activities between the administration and the members of the department	9	15	20	10	8	10	37	11

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.





TABLE XXXVII (Continued)

Problems of Department Head Position	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total Frequency	% <sup>a</sup>
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Lack of involvement by the teachers in the work of the department	12	21	21	10	4	5	37	11
Staffing problems with teachers in the department which create obstacles to the efficient organization of the school facilities	7	12	20	10	8	10	35	10
No problems evident in the department head position	6	10	20	10	8	10	34	10
Time-tabling inadequacies which prevent department heads from being of assistance to all members of the department at all times	3	5	17	8	6	8	26	8
Miscellaneous problems of the department head position	4	7	15	7	5	7	24	7
Total	58	100	206	99	76	99	340	100

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



Many department heads expressed concern over the lack of a clearly defined role of authority and responsibility. Coupled with this problem was the lack of clerical help and para-professional assistance.

Strangely enough, the department heads in small schools indicated that one of their greatest problems was the lack of communication between the administration and the teachers. The department heads of the small schools also rated their most serious problem as the lack of involvement of teachers in their department.

All department heads revealed anxieties over the problems of staffing of their departments. Many teachers were forced to teach in more than one subject area; the annual turnover of staff did not permit continuity and stability of staff. Coupled with the staffing problems were the inadequacies of time tabling. The department heads were not consulted concerning the organization of the timetable. Subject area classes were scheduled simultaneously; the time table remained rigid and inflexible.

About 10% of the respondents revealed that no major problems existed in the operation of the department headship within their high schools.

Not all of the responses could be fitted into the major categories. Several department heads felt the major problem was the lack of physical stamina and energy to fulfill all the necessary demands of the position. Other respondents felt that too much department headship control destroyed teacher initiative. One respondent felt that the problems of the department head varied



from year to year; another respondent indicated that animosity and jealousy resulted over the choice of the department head. Others stated that the department was too small, that a long established department became a vested interest in a school, that academic and non-academic departments were not cooperative and that new department heads lacked adequate training for the position.

The problems stated by the department heads are summarized, in rank order and frequency, in Table XXXVIII. The problem experienced by department heads of small schools were not correlated with the problems experienced by other department heads. The Spearman rho rank correlations, applied to the three sizes of schools, were as follows: small-sized to medium-sized, 0.396 (N. S.); small-sized to large-sized, -0.11 (N. S.); and medium-sized to large-sized high schools, 0.746\*.

### III. IMPROVEMENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT HEADSHIP

The department heads offered many opinions for improvements in the position of department head. A total of 308 responses were recorded; twenty-three department heads made no comment on possible improvements.

The 308 responses were forced into the nine major categories. Table XXXIX shows, by school size, the frequency and per cent of responses concerning possible improvements.

The highest frequency of response reported that the improvement most needed by the department heads was to be

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\*Significant to the 0.05 level.

N. S. - Not significant.







TABLE XXXVIII

DEPARTMENT HEADS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE  
PROBLEMS OF THE DEPARTMENT HEAD POSITION  
REPORTED BY FREQUENCY, BY RANK  
BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 340

Problems of Department Head Position	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total
	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	
Lack of time for all the necessary tasks to be performed by the department head	7	3.5	41	1	17	1	65
Lack of a clearly defined role of authority and responsibility for the department head	5	6.5	26	2.5	11	2	42
Lack of clerical help, office facilities, department funds, laboratory assistants and teacher aides	5	6.5	26	2.5	9	3	40
Lack of communication and coordination of activities between the administration and the members of the department	9	2	20	6	8	5	37
							4.5

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.



TABLE XXXVIII (Continued)

Problems of Department Head Position	Small School			Medium School			Large School			Total Frequency	Rank
	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	f	Rank	f		
Lack of involvement by the teachers in the work of the department	12	1	21	4	4	9	4	9	37		4.5
Staffing problems with teachers in the department which create obstacles to the efficient organization of the school facilities	7	3.5	20	6	8	5	6	5	35		6
No problems evident in the department head position	6	5	20	6	8	5	8	5	34		7
Time-tabling inadequacies which prevent department heads from being of assistance to all members of the department at all times	3	9	17	8	6	7	6	7	26		8
Miscellaneous problems of the department head position	4	8	15	9	5	8	5	8	24		9

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.



TABLE XXXIX

DEPARTMENT HEADS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE  
POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT  
HEAD POSITION IN THEIR SCHOOLS, REPORTED  
BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 308

Possible Improvements of Department Head Position	Small School Frequency %	Medium School Frequency %	Large School Frequency %	Total Frequency % <sup>a</sup>				
The department head should be released from all unnecessary tasks by the provision of clerical help and teacher-aides	6	12	54	29	17	24	77	25
The department head should be consulted more often in major school decisions	14	28	42	22	9	13	65	21
The teaching load should be light enough to allow the department head to do research, to work with teachers in in-service education and to promote professional growth	7	14	23	12	7	10	37	12
The position of department head should be defined so that levels of authority and responsibility are clearly delineated	4	8	17	9	15	21	36	12
Miscellaneous improvement of the department head position	8	16	20	11	6	9	34	11

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.

<sup>a</sup>All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.





TABLE XXXIX (Continued)

Possible Improvements of Department Head Position	Small School		Medium School		Large School		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	% <sup>a</sup>
There should be more effective communication and coordination between the administration and the department heads	4	8	11	6	4	6	19	6
The department head should be assured of improved length of tenure and remuneration	3	6	4	2	8	11	15	5
There should be more effective communication between different subject area department heads, central office supervisors and teachers of the department	3	6	9	5	1	1	13	4
The department head should be provided with office space, a telephone and adequate resource materials	1	2	8	4	3	4	12	4
Total	50	100	188	100	70	99	308	100

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.

<sup>a</sup> All percentages used in this study are rounded to the nearest whole number.



released from all the unnecessary tasks by the provision of clerical help, teacher aides and para-professionals. Department heads stated that they would like to use their released time from the classroom in a more efficient and profitable manner for their professional assistance to teachers in their department.

Department heads revealed that they should be consulted more in major school decisions such as curriculum development, staffing of the department and student evaluation.

Another major improvement indicated that the department head's teaching load should be light enough to allow him to experiment with new courses, to provide research into curriculum development and to assist in a continuous program of teacher in-service education.

Many department heads suggested that the position of department head should be more clearly defined. They felt there was ambiguity and conflict between the administrative and supervisory functions of the position.

Other suggested improvements were as follows:

1. There should be more effective communication between the administration and the department heads.
2. The department head should be assured of improved length of tenure, remuneration and provision of adequate released time from the classroom.
3. There should be more effective communication between different subject area department heads, central office supervisors, and teachers of the department.
4. The department head should be provided with office



space, a telephone and adequate resource materials.

Approximately 11% of the responses included general improvements concerning the department head position which could not be placed into the major categories. One respondent stated that no extra salary was needed--just extra time. Another department head revealed that the emphasis should be on leadership and mastery of subject matter rather than patronage, as it often is. It was also suggested that department heads be paid an extra salary to develop course outlines and programs during the month of August. Another respondent questioned the awarding of the department headship merely as a reward for loyal service. Several respondents indicated that an organization for department heads in Alberta seemed necessary. Numerous responses suggested that effective department heads were too often channeled off into administrative positions. One respondent expressed the fear that department heads might become "junior administrators," thus destroying their effectiveness among the members of the department.

The department head of the small-sized high school expressed a different range of views about improvements than did the department heads of the other two sizes of high schools. Table XL represents, by rank order and frequency, the opinions expressed concerning the improvements necessary to the department head organization. The Spearman rho rank correlation were as follows: small-sized to medium-sized school,  $0.881^*$ , small-sized to large-sized school,  $0.667^*$ , and medium-sized to large-sized high school,  $0.600$  (N. S.).

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\*Significant to the 0.05 level.

N. S. - Not significant.







TABLE XL

DEPARTMENT HEADS' OPINIONS CONCERNING THE  
POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT  
HEAD POSITION, REPORTED BY FREQUENCY,  
BY RANK ORDER AND BY SCHOOL SIZE

N = 308

Possible Improvements of Department Head Position	Small School Frequency	Small School Rank	Medium School Frequency	Medium School Rank	Large School Frequency	Large School Rank	Total Frequency	Total Rank
The department head should be released from all un- necessary tasks by the pro- vision of clerical help and teacher-aides	6	4	54	1	17	1	77	1
The department head should be consulted more often in major school decisions	14	1	42	2	9	3	65	2
The teaching load should be light enough to allow the department head to do re- search, to work with teach- ers in in-service education and to promote growth	7	3	23	3	7	5	37	3
The position of department head should be defined so that levels of authority and responsibility are clearly delineated	4	5.5	17	5	15	2	36	4

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.



TABLE XL (Continued)

Possible Improvements of Department Head Position	Small School Frequency Rank	Medium School Frequency Rank	Large School Frequency Rank	Total Frequency Rank
Miscellaneous improvements of the department head position	8	2	4	6
There should be more effective communication and coordination between the administration and the department heads	4	5.5	11	6
The department head should be assured of improved length of tenure and remuneration	3	7.5	4	9
There should be more effective communication between different subject area department heads, central office supervisors and teachers of the department	3	7.5	9	7
The department head should be provided with office space, a telephone and adequate resource material	1	9	8	8
			3	12
			8	13
			9	15
			7	19
			6	34
			5	5

NOTE: N refers to the actual number of responses to this open-end question and not necessarily to the total possible number of department heads.



## SUMMARY

The department heads of Alberta seemed to have definite opinions about the strengths, the problems and the possible improvements of the department headship.

Most department heads felt that their major strength was in the coordination of the many instructional levels of their department. They also indicated that department heads could offer leadership to the members of their department in order that classroom instruction would be improved.

The greatest problem faced by most department heads in Alberta was the lack of time to carry out the duties of coordination, leadership, and improvement of instruction.

Opinions expressed about improvements revealed that department heads should be released from tasks that para-professionals might better accomplish so that the functions of coordination, leadership, and improvement of instruction could be effectively implemented. Many department heads expressed opinions that they wished to be consulted more by high school administrators regarding curriculum development, the staffing of the department and the organization of classes.

The opinions reported by department heads of small high schools (25 to 49 teachers) did not always correspond to those of other department heads. The department heads from small-sized high schools felt that their major strengths should be in the improvement of classroom instruction and in the in-service program to new





teachers of the department. The major problem seen by the department heads of the small high school was the lack of involvement by teachers of their department; this problem was not reported as a major one by department heads of medium-sized high schools. The department head from the small-sized high school was also much more concerned about being consulted by the administration than by being released from clerical tasks.

The opinions of the department heads of the large-sized high school (80 teachers or more) more frequently corresponded with the department head in the medium-sized high school (60 to 79 teachers). The department head in the large-sized high school did not see lack of staff involvement as a possible problem; however, the department head in the large-sized high school did recognize the need for a more clearly defined role of authority and responsibility.

The analysis of these three open-ended questions was possible because of a 91% response by the department heads to this section of the questionnaire. .



## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a restatement of the problem, a summary of the findings of the nine sub-problems, some implications of the study, and suggestions for further research.

#### I. RESTATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the nature of the position of department head in Alberta high schools of twenty-five or more teachers.

Since no list of Alberta high school department heads was available the sample was arrived at in the following manner:

1. It was assumed that only large high schools employed department heads; therefore, the names of fifty-eight high schools, employing twenty-five or more teachers, were retrieved by a computer system. These fifty-eight schools were located in twenty-four different Alberta school districts, divisions and counties.
2. The first questionnaire used in this study, The General Information Survey, was mailed to each of the superintendents of these twenty-four school districts, divisions and counties to ascertain whether department heads were employed by their school systems. Additional background information on the department head's position was also requested.



3. From the information received from the superintendents, it became evident that only ten of the twenty-four school systems surveyed employed high school department heads. These ten school systems employed a total of two hundred and twenty department heads--one hundred and seventy-four males and forty-six females--in thirty-six high schools, ranging in teacher population from twenty-five to one hundred and forty teachers.

After the sample had been established, the second questionnaire, The Department Head in the High Schools of Alberta, was mailed to each of the two hundred and twenty department heads to determine the nature of the position of department head in Alberta high schools of twenty-five or more teachers.

Information was sought from the department heads regarding the nature of the high schools in the sample, the nature of the respondents, the nature of the position of the department head, the actual duties performed by the department heads, the suggested functions of the department head, the criteria for the selection of department heads, and opinions concerning the major strengths, the problems and possible improvements of the department head position.

Questionnaires were completed and returned by one hundred and eighty-one department heads; all of the thirty-six schools were represented.

## II. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

This study sought to answer nine sub-problems posed at the





beginning of the research. The data supplied by the superintendents answered the first three sub-problems; the answers to the remaining sub-problems were provided from responses by the department heads. A brief discussion of the major findings of the sub-problems follows.

Sub-problem One - Which Alberta school districts, divisions and counties employed department heads in high schools of twenty-five or more teachers?

1. From a survey of twenty-four school districts, divisions, and counties, a total of ten school systems employed department heads in 1969.
2. These ten school systems included eight urban school districts, one rural school division and one rural county.
3. Four school superintendents indicated that the department head system may be introduced into the high schools of their areas in the next few years.

Sub-problem Two - What were some of the terms of employment for high school department heads? (e. g., method of selection, length of tenure, remuneration, released time for classroom supervision, job specifications, in-service education)

1. Six superintendents reported that department heads were appointed by the superintendent, upon the recommendation of the high school principal.
2. The length of tenure for department heads ranged from two years to permanent appointment.
3. Eight of the superintendents indicated that department heads were subject to school board policies and rules regarding the position.
4. Additional salary was paid to all department heads in



Alberta; the median allowance reported by the ten school systems was approximately \$560.00.

5. All ten school systems indicated that department heads were provided with released time from the classroom to carry out department heads' responsibilities.
6. In-service education for department heads was provided by only one of the ten school systems.
7. The ten superintendents indicated that department heads were employed to coordinate instruction for thirteen major subject areas and ten minor subject areas. (Table VIII)

Sub-problem Three - What opinions were held by superintendents of the twenty-four Alberta school districts, divisions and counties regarding the strengths, weaknesses and possible improvements in the department head position?

1. The superintendents from the twenty-four selected areas expressed the opinion that the greatest strengths of the department headship were in the provision of in-service education to new teachers, and in improved communication between administration and the teachers of the department.
2. Two superintendents indicated that department heads should have more in-service training before accepting the position.
3. One superintendent stated that often a department head creates a divisive feeling among staff and subject departments.



4. One superintendent felt that department heads should be given more "line" responsibility.

Sub-problem Four - What were the characteristics of teachers employed as department heads in Alberta high schools of twenty-five or more teachers?

1. Male department heads outnumbered female department heads by about four to one.
2. The average age for Alberta department heads was in the category of 41 to 50 years; males were younger on the average than female department heads.
3. About 25% of department heads held Masters' degrees or better; only 1% of department heads held no degree.
4. Department heads possessed specialized training in varied fields and vocations.
5. Over 54% of department heads possessed more than twelve years of teaching experience; however, only 33% possessed over four years of administrative experience.
6. About 41% of department heads had been employed in senior high schools for over twelve years.
7. Over 73% of all department heads in high schools of twenty-five or more teachers had held the position of department head for less than four years.

Sub-problem Five - What was the nature of the position of department head in Alberta high schools of twenty-five or more teachers?

1. About two-thirds of department heads reported that they taught more than half of the school day.
2. The size of department for which the head was responsible





was between five and eight teachers. About 7% of department heads had departments of over sixteen teachers, while 15% were responsible for departments of less than four teachers.

3. Department heads were designated more frequently for the areas of English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, Business Education, Physical Education, Languages, Guidance and Technical-Vocational than for other areas.
4. A total of 11% of respondents indicated that they were responsible for combinations of two or three subject areas.
5. About 92% of department heads were provided with released time from classroom duties.
6. The amount of released time varied with the subject area of responsibility.
7. Less than half of the department heads were provided with clerical help.

Sub-problem Six - What were the actual duties being performed by department heads?

1. The actual duties in the area of communication and coordination of all aspects of the department were ranked first by all department heads; the category of the provision of materials, supplies and equipment was ranked closely behind.
2. Department heads also performed many duties associated



with the provision of instructional leadership and of the organization of the department.

3. The actual duties in the areas of evaluation, staffing, and supervision of the members of the department were ranked with less frequency than other tasks.

Sub-problem Seven -What duties should be performed by department heads ?

1. Over 91% of the department heads stated that among the suggested functions which "were" assigned to department heads and which "should be" their responsibility were the orientation of new teachers into the department, the requisition of department supplies, the chairing of department meetings, the planning of the department testing program, and the preparation of department notices.
2. Less than 50% of the department heads could agree on some of the functions which "were not" assigned to department heads and which "should not be" their responsibility. These functions were: acting as a substitute teacher, working directly with students having academic or personal problems, grouping students for placement in classes, providing administrators with an appraisal of teacher performance, and conducting demonstration lessons for teachers of the department.
3. A possible conflict of responsibility was indicated by less than 20% of the department heads when they reported



functions which "were" assigned to them but which "should not be" their responsibility. Some of these conflicting functions were: acting as a substitute teacher; distributing department notices; supervising the teachers of the department; serving on the principal's administrative staff; and working directly with students having academic or personal problems.

4. About 30% of department heads indicated additional conflict with functions which "were not" presently assigned to them but which "should be" their responsibility. Some of the most often named functions were: drawing up the department teacher assignments for the school master timetable; grouping students for placement; developing in-service training for members of the department; conducting demonstration lessons; and serving as a part of the principal's administrative staff.
5. The consensus of opinion of the department heads indicated that at least fifteen of the twenty-five suggested functions were deemed to be the responsibility of the department head. The remaining ten functions would seem to be "improperly assigned" and should be the responsibility of other specialized school personnel.

Sub-problem Eight - What were the most important criteria for the selection of department heads in Alberta?

1. Department heads in Alberta selected the following criteria as most important qualities for department





heads: (1) Leadership ability; (2) Superior teaching ability; and (3) Mastery of subject matter.

2. Department heads in Alberta selected the following three criteria as least important qualities for department heads: (1) Seniority in the department; (2) Popularity among members of the department; and (3) Graduate study in the field.

Sub-problem Nine - What were the opinions of Alberta department heads relating to the major strengths, the problems, and the potential for improvement of the position of department head within the total high school organization?

1. The department heads reported that the most important strengths of the department headship were the ability to coordinate all the levels of instruction within the department, and the ability to offer educational leadership to all members of the department.
2. The most serious problems indicated by the department heads were the lack of time to complete all necessary tasks, and the lack of a clearly defined role of authority and responsibility.
3. The opinions expressed about possible improvements in the department headship indicated that department heads should be released from tasks that para-professionals might better accomplish, and that department heads should be more often consulted in regard to major school decisions.



### III. IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study suggest the following implications:

1. There is some evidence that the department head organization will be introduced into high schools in smaller rural school systems. However, many more teacher specialists will be needed to act as department heads if the expansion of the system is to occur.
2. A need for in-service training for new teachers appointed as department heads was noted by many respondents.
3. Men continue to outnumber women in holding the department head position; consequently, women should perhaps be encouraged to upgrade their teaching qualifications and apply for department headships as a method for meeting the increasing need.
4. Not all areas lend themselves to departmentalization. The department head of Guidance seems to operate more as an "administrator" than as a department head of a subject discipline.
5. Department heads are expected to fulfill tasks of a supervisory, administrative, instructional and clerical nature. Perhaps prospective department heads not only should be specialists in subject matter but also should have experience and training in educational administration and the social sciences.
6. The department head in the small-sized high school faces problems of a different nature than those faced by department heads in larger high schools, particularly because of the isolation and inability to discuss problems with other department heads. An attempt should be made for department heads of small schools to meet together on a



district basis for mutual benefit.

7. An attempt should be made for high school department heads to share their instructional leadership with the teachers of several subject areas, subject clusters, and core programs. This cooperative venture might provide the department heads with a greater understanding of the total high school program, thus helping to avoid the rigid fragmentation of subject disciplines often caused by departmentalization.

8. Department heads in Alberta represent a group of professional "master teachers"; consequently, their instructional talent should be utilized to a much greater degree by high school administrators.

9. Because the department head is a recent innovation in Alberta, the position is not clearly understood; many department heads find it difficult to function satisfactorily in the many diverse areas for which they are responsible. The department head will not be truly effective until his duties and functions are carefully delineated and his position is given full status by superintendents, principals and classroom teachers.

#### IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The scope for educational research into the position of department head is vast. The following areas might prove fruitful for research efforts.

Rôle studies of the department head would seem to be most crucial, as the greatest concern of department heads is the lack of a clearly defined role delineating their authority and responsibility.

The analysis of the position of department head, as perceived by administrators, principals, and classroom teachers, might prove





useful in further delineating the functions of the department headship.

A comparison between the department head and the subject coordinator would also prove beneficial in determining the differences between the two positions.



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## APPENDIX



APPENDIX A  
LETTERS OF PERMISSION TO USE INSTRUMENTS



Southern Illinois  
University

CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS

February 22, 1969

Miss Audrey Clark  
General Services Building  
Edmonton 7, Alberta  
Canada

Dear Miss Clark:

I am pleased to grant you permission to use the instrument (questionnaire) developed in my department head study at Indiana University, 1966. Also feel free to make necessary modifications for the purposes of your study. I should appreciate in return, however, a copy of your study in this area as I have continued studies relative to department heads in secondary schools. Also, I am planning a publication in this area in the near future, and perhaps could use some of your findings with appropriate credits to you.

Please advise if I can be of future help.

Sincerely,





INDIANA UNIVERSITY

168

*The Northwest Campus*

3400 BROADWAY

GARY, INDIANA 46408

TEL. NO. 219—887-0111

February 26, 1969

Miss A. M. Clark  
Room 848  
General Services Building  
Dept. of Educational Administration  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton 7 Alberta, Canada

Dear Miss Clark:

This is to inform you that you may use any or all of the questionnaire that I developed when doing my Doctor's Degree at Indiana University.

Enclosed is a copy of the questionnaire that I sent your department heads in North Central Association schools.

Good luck on your Master's Degree.

Sincerely yours,



## APPENDIX B

### COVER LETTER TO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS



Room 848, General Services Building  
Edmonton 7, Alberta  
February 28, 1969

Dear Sir:

I am a graduate student in the Department of Educational Administration and am presently gathering information concerning the topic of "The Department Head in the High Schools of Alberta." Very little information about this position seems to be available at the present time; therefore, it would seem that this project might be of some value to high school administrators in Alberta. The Chief Superintendent of Schools, Dr. R. E. Rees, has been advised of this project and has given approval-in-principle to the research.

Would you be kind enough to help me to collect the following information ?

1. If you DO NOT employ high school department heads in your school district, division or county, please complete questions 1 and 3 of the attached General Information Survey and forward it to me in the enclosed envelope.
2. If you DO employ high school department heads in your school district, division or county, please complete all of the attached General Information Survey and forward it to me in the enclosed envelope.
3. If you DO employ high school department heads in your school district, division or county, would you please be kind enough to grant me permission to forward a questionnaire to each department head employed by your school board ? To maintain anonymity of respondents, the questionnaire would be mailed to the high school principals for distribution to the department heads, who would respond to the survey on an individual basis.

I would be very pleased to provide you with a summary of this study upon the date of its completion.

I would appreciate any assistance you may be able to extend to me for this research project.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours truly,





## APPENDIX C

### COVER LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS



Room 848, General Services Building  
Edmonton 7, Alberta  
March 15, 1969

I was recently granted permission by your Superintendent to proceed with my research study of "The Department Head in High Schools of Alberta." I would appreciate your assistance with the distribution of data collection instruments to certain of your staff members.

The Central Office has indicated that there are        department heads in your high school. Would you please be kind enough to circulate one of the enclosed questionnaires to EACH department head on your staff? Self-addressed envelopes are provided for their convenience in returning the forms.

You will note a coding system on each return envelope. This identifies only the name of the high school and the total number of the teaching staff; I have no way of identifying individual department heads. This coding system is merely a precaution in the event that a follow-up letter becomes necessary. Such a letter would then be sent as a reminder to each of the department heads.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in the distribution of these questionnaires for this research project. I hope it does not constitute too great an intrusion upon your busy schedule.

Yours truly,



## APPENDIX D

### COVER LETTER TO DEPARTMENT HEADS





"The Department Head in High Schools of Alberta"

March 15, 1969

Dear Colleague:

I was recently granted permission by your Superintendent to proceed with my research study of "The Department Head in High Schools of Alberta."

Department heads have been neglected in previous educational research and yet it seems obvious that there can be no study without your help. Would you therefore, please be kind enough to complete the enclosed questionnaire and forward it to me at your earliest convenience ? A self-addressed envelope is supplied for its return.

The total number of high school department heads in Alberta is quite small so that the view of each is very important; therefore, I would make a special plea that you make a real effort to complete this questionnaire and return it to me. I hope that you, too, will see the research as important and worthy of your time in responding.

Since department heads are especially busy people, a follow-up reminder may be necessary. On the other hand, anonymity of respondents must be protected. To solve this problem, I have coded on the return envelope the name of the high school and the total number of the teaching staff. This code in no way points to any individual respondent. It does, however, make it possible for me to send a follow-up reminder to department heads of a particular school if the total number of returns from any school is substantially under the total number of department head positions. I would also note that, once the data are coded for punch-card processing, the original instruments will be destroyed so that your responses will receive the maximum possible amount of protection.

I do appreciate your assistance in helping me to describe the position of department head in high schools of Alberta, a position that seems likely to contribute much to the total effectiveness of our educational effort.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours truly,



APPENDIX E

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS



Room 848, General Services Building  
Edmonton 7, Alberta  
March 15, 1969

Dear Superintendent:

Re. Graduate Research Project - "The Department Head  
in the High Schools of Alberta"

Thank you very much for your prompt completion and return of the "General Information Survey" describing the position of high school department heads in your school district.

I would now like to proceed with the distribution of questionnaires as outlined in my original letter of February 28, 1969. A copy of the department head questionnaire is included for your perusal.

Would you please be kind enough to complete the attached self-addressed post card to verify if your permission is granted to proceed with my project ?

I would appreciate your decision at your earliest convenience so that I may forward the questionnaires to the \_\_\_\_\_ department heads employed in the high schools of your area. I am hopeful that all pertinent data may be gathered by April 4, 1969.

Thank you very much for forwarding your decision. I hope it does not constitute too great an intrusion upon your busy schedule.

Yours truly,





APPENDIX F

FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS



Room 848, General Services Building  
Edmonton 7, Alberta  
April 11, 1969

Dear :

Re. Graduate Research Project - "The Department Head  
in the High Schools of Alberta"

Please extend my appreciation to the Department Heads on your staff for their excellent cooperation in the completion and return of the questionnaires for my research project.

I realize that department heads are extremely busy people; therefore, the one hundred per cent return of the questionnaires is very gratifying.\*

Upon the completion of this project, a summary of the findings will be forwarded to your school.

May I also, at this time, express my thanks to you for your cooperation in my research project.

Yours truly, \_\_\_\_\_



APPENDIX G  
INSTRUMENT FOR SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS





"The Nature of the Position of the Department Head  
in High Schools\* of Alberta"

Name of school district, division or county

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INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer the following questions by placing a check mark (✓) or by writing the information in the appropriate space. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Does your school district, division or county presently have a system of high school department heads ?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_

2. If the answer to question 1 was "yes," please indicate the year of introduction of department heads and list any known reasons why the system of department heads was first introduced into your school district, division or county.

Year of introduction \_\_\_\_\_ (approximately)

3. If the answer to question 1 was "no," please list any known reasons why the system of high school department heads has never been introduced into the high schools of your area.

4. Please indicate the total number of high school department heads who are presently employed by your district, division or county.

Department heads:      Male \_\_\_\_\_  
   Female \_\_\_\_\_

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\*For the purposes of this study, a high school has been designated as a secondary school containing a minimum of Grades 10 and 11, and a total teaching staff of 25 teachers or more.



8. How are department heads selected for their position ?

- a. Appointed by the superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Appointed by the superintendent upon the principal's recommendation \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Selected by the principal \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Appointed from applications submitted by all high school teachers to the Central Office of the school district, division or county \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

9. What is the term of appointment for high school department heads in your district, division or county ?

- a. one year \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. two years \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. three years \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. subject to review on an annual basis \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. permanent appointment \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

10. Does your school district, division or county have a job description, a written statement of duties or a policy of rules pertaining to the nature of the position of high school department head ?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do department heads in your district, division or county receive an additional salary, bonus or increment to carry out the designated duties of high school department head ?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_

12. If department heads receive additional compensation for their duties, please indicate either the range of salary or the basis upon which the additional salary is calculated.

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13. Are department heads provided with released time from the classroom to carry out the designated duties of high school department head ? (Do not include normal classroom preparation time.)

Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
No \_\_\_\_\_  
Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_



14. If the answer to question 13 was "yes," please indicate the approximate number of minutes per day that the high school department heads are released from the classroom to carry out their designated duties. (Do not include normal classroom preparation time.)
- a. Less than 30 minutes per day \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. From 30 to 60 minutes per day \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. From 60 to 90 minutes per day \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. From 90 to 120 minutes per day \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

15. Does your school district, division or county provide a program of In-Service Training for all department heads ?
- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_

16. Do the high school department heads from various subject areas meet on a system-wide basis ? e.g. all Science department heads or all Mathematics department heads
- Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- No \_\_\_\_\_

17. If subject area department heads meet on a system-wide basis, please indicate the approximate regularity of these meetings.

\_\_\_\_\_

18. From your perspective, please indicate briefly the strengths of the high school department head system as exemplified in your school district, division or county.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

19. From your perspective, please indicate briefly the areas of improvements yet to be effected in the high school department head system within your school district, division or county.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your cooperation in providing this information for this research project.

A. M. Clark

## APPENDIX H

### INSTRUMENT FOR DEPARTMENT HEADS





# THE DEPARTMENT HEAD IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS\* OF ALBERTA

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please answer the following questions by placing a check mark (✓) or by writing the information in the appropriate space. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

## PART ONE—BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Present position:

Department head—teaching more than half-time .....

Department head—teaching less than half-time .....

2. Sex:

Male .....

Female .....

3. Age:

Under 21 years .....

21-30 years .....

31-40 years .....

41-50 years .....

51-60 years .....

Over 60 years .....

4. Professional Training: (Indicate **all** applicable answers.)

Teacher training college .....

Bachelor's degree in a faculty other than education .....

Bachelor of Education degree .....

Graduate Diploma in Education .....

Master's degree in a faculty other than education .....

Master of Education degree .....

Ph.D. or Ed.D. ....

Other (Please specify) .....

5. Total number of years of teaching experience: (Include years of administrative experience.)

one year .....

2- 4 years .....

5- 8 years .....

9-12 years .....

13-16 years .....

over 16 years .....

---

\* For the purposes of this study, a high school has been designated as a secondary school containing a minimum of Grades 10 and 11, and a total teaching staff of 25 teachers or more.

6. Total number of years of administrative experience:

0 years .....  
2- 4 years .....  
5- 8 years .....  
9-12 years .....  
13-16 years .....  
over 16 years .....

7. Total number of years of teaching experience in **senior high school**: (Include administrative experience.)

one year .....  
2- 4 years .....  
5- 8 years .....  
9-12 years .....  
13-16 years .....  
over 16 years .....

8. Total number of years of experience in your **present** high school: (Include administrative experience.)

one year .....  
2- 4 years .....  
5- 8 years .....  
9-12 years .....  
13-16 years .....  
over 16 years .....

9. Total number of teachers on your present high school staff:

25-29 teachers .....  
30-49 teachers .....  
50-79 teachers .....  
More than 80 teachers .....

10. Indicate the grade levels taught in your present high school:

Grades 10, 11 and 12 .....  
Grades 11 and 12 .....  
Grades 10 and 11 .....  
Grades 9, 10 and 11 .....  
Grades 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 .....  
Grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 .....  
Other (please specify)  
.....

## PART TWO—THE NATURE OF THE POSITION OF DEPARTMENT HEAD

11. Please indicate the total number of years you have been designated as a high school department head.

one year .....

2- 4 years .....

5- 8 years .....

9-12 years .....

13-16 years .....

over 16 years .....

12. Indicate the subject area (or areas) of responsibility for which you are presently designated as a department head. If you are a department head responsible for **more than one** subject area, please specify.

Subject area of responsibility: .....

Subject areas of responsibility: (If **more than one** area.) .....

13. Indicate total number of teachers in the department of your special area (or areas) of responsibility.

1- 4 teachers .....

5- 8 teachers .....

9-12 teachers .....

13-16 teachers .....

over 16 teachers .....

14. Are you provided with released time from the classroom to carry out the designated duties of department head? (Do not include normal classroom preparation time.)

Yes .....

No .....

15. If the answer to question 14 was "yes," please indicate the **approximate** number of minutes per day that you are released from the classroom to carry out your designated duties as department head. (Do not include normal classroom preparation time.)

Less than 30 minutes per day .....

From 30 to 60 minutes per day .....

From 60 to 90 minutes per day .....

From 90 to 120 minutes per day .....

Other (Please specify)

.....

16. Are you provided with clerical help to assist you in your duties as department head?

Yes .....

No .....

17. If you are provided with clerical help, please indicate briefly the extent of this assistance.

.....

18. Please estimate the total number of **subject department** meetings convened by you as department head during the month of February 1969.

no meetings .....

one meeting .....

2-4 meetings .....

more than 4 meetings .....

19. Please indicate the organization of the instructional program of your present high school.

Ten month school year .....

Two semester school year .....

Trimester school year .....

Other (Please specify)

.....

### **PART THREE—THE ACTUAL DUTIES PERFORMED BY DEPARTMENT HEADS**

20. Please list **FIVE SPECIFIC DUTIES OR TASKS**, performed by you in the **past school day**, which had been assigned to you because of your designated position as high school department head.

1. ....

2. ....

3. ....

4. ....

5. ....



# **PART FOUR—THE SUGGESTED FUNCTIONS OF DEPARTMENT HEADS**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Listed below is a series of functions sometimes assigned to department heads. Indicate in Column I whether the function “is” or “is not” a department head function in your high school by placing a check mark (✓) in the appropriate column. Then indicate in Column II whether you feel the function “should” or “should not” be a department head function by placing a check mark (✓) in the appropriate column.

**BE SURE TO CHECK ONE RESPONSE IN BOTH COLUMN I AND COLUMN II FOR EACH FUNCTION LISTED.**

COLUMN I		DEPARTMENT HEAD FUNCTION	COLUMN II	
IS	IS NOT		SHOULD	SHOULD NOT
.....	.....	21. To requisition department supplies and equipment.	.....	.....
.....	.....	22. To administer department funds.	.....	.....
.....	.....	23. To preside at subject area department meetings.	.....	.....
.....	.....	24. To act as a substitute teacher when members of the department are absent.	.....	.....
.....	.....	25. To work directly with students having academic or personal problems.	.....	.....
.....	.....	26. To orient new teachers into the department.	.....	.....
.....	.....	27. To provide leadership in planning the department testing program.	.....	.....
.....	.....	28. To work with teachers in improving and co-ordinating their procedures for student evaluation.	.....	.....
.....	.....	29. To draw up the department teaching assignments for the school master timetable.	.....	.....
.....	.....	30. To group students for placement in classes on the school master time table.	.....	.....

COLUMN I		DEPARTMENT HEAD FUNCTION	COLUMN II	
IS	IS NOT		SHOULD	SHOULD NOT
.....	.....	31. To serve as a part of the principal's administrative staff.	.....	.....
.....	.....	32. To conduct demonstration lessons for the teachers of the department.	.....	.....
.....	.....	33. To maintain a professional library for members of the department.	.....	.....
.....	.....	34. To develop and implement in-service training programs for all members of the department.	.....	.....
.....	.....	35. To familiarize all members of the department with community resources and facilities.	.....	.....
.....	.....	36. To prepare department notices and bulletins.	.....	.....
.....	.....	37. To distribute department notices and bulletins.	.....	.....
.....	.....	38. To provide administrators with an appraisal of the classroom performance of teachers of the department.	.....	.....
.....	.....	39. To work with teachers of the department who are experiencing problems with student behavior.	.....	.....
.....	.....	40. To supervise the teachers of the department through classroom visitations and observations.	.....	.....
.....	.....	41. To assist members of the department in the interpretation of examination results.	.....	.....
.....	.....	42. To provide leadership in the selection of all instructional materials.	.....	.....
.....	.....	43. To demonstrate the use of newly acquired or newly developed equipment.	.....	.....
.....	.....	44. To conduct research and experimentation within the department.	.....	.....
.....	.....	45. To provide leadership in the development of the curriculum for the total school program.	.....	.....



# **PART FIVE—CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF DEPARTMENT HEADS**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Indicate what you consider to be the four (4) most important criteria in the selection of department heads by writing the word "MOST" in four appropriate spaces. Indicate the four (4) least important criteria by writing the word "LEAST" in four appropriate spaces.

UPON COMPLETION OF THIS SECTION, FOUR SPACES SHOULD INDICATE "MOST", FOUR SPACES "LEAST", AND FOUR SPACES SHOULD BE LEFT BLANK

CRITERIA	RATING
46. Leadership ability	.....
47. Popularity among members of the department	.....
48. Mastery of subject matter	.....
49. Superior teaching ability	.....
50. Understanding of students	.....
51. Co-operative spirit	.....
52. Administrative ability	.....
53. Graduate study in the field	.....
54. Seniority in the department	.....
55. Disposition toward professional growth	.....
56. Knowledge and ability in curriculum development	.....
57. Willingness to work	.....

PART SIX—OPINIONS RELATING TO THE POSITION OF DEPARTMENT HEAD

58. In your opinion, what do you see as the major **strengths** of the department head position?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

59. What major **problems** have you encountered in your attempts to develop the potential of the position of department head in your present high school?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

60. In your opinion, what **improvements**, if any, could be made in the system of department head organization in the high school?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you very much indeed for taking time from your busy schedule to provide this information for this research project.

A. M. Clark









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